E/2009/39
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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

ANNUAL REPORT
1 May 2008-29 April 2009

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS, 2009

SUPPLEMENT No. 19

UNITED NATIONS

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
ACPR	Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APCICT	Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development
APCTT	Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
APETIT	Network of Asia-Pacific Education and Training Institutes in Tourism
APTA	Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement
ARTNeT	Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
CAPSA	Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific
CCOP	Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
EPOC	ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre
GDP	gross domestic product
HIV/AIDS	human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ICST	information, communications and space technology
ICT	information and communications technology
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODA	official development assistance
R and D	research and development
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SIAP	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise
SPECA	United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia
TCDC	technical cooperation among developing countries
UNAPCAEM	United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Notes: Values are in United States dollars unless otherwise specified.
The term "billion" signifies a thousand million.

Introduction

1. The sixty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific was held against the backdrop of an economic crisis, food/fuel price volatility and climate change, a triple threat that could roll back development gains. The implications of this triple threat for the Asia-Pacific region were therefore high on the agenda of the Commission as members discussed ways of dealing with the crises.

Chapter I

ISSUES CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

2. At its sixty-fifth session, the Commission adopted six resolutions, which are brought to the attention of the Council. The Commission also adopted decision 65/1, which requires action by the Council in connection with the venue of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission (for the text of all resolutions and the decision, see chapter IV).

Chapter II

WORK OF THE COMMISSION SINCE THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION

A. Activities of subsidiary bodies

3. During the period under review, in pursuance of Commission resolution 64/1, the first sessions of the following subsidiary bodies were held:

(a) Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction;

(b) Committee on Information and Communications Technology;

(c) Committee on Social Development;

(d) Committee on Statistics;

(e) Committee on Transport.

4. The dates, bureaux and document symbols of the reports of the meetings are given in annex II to the present report. The reports of those bodies reflect the discussions held, the agreements reached and the decisions taken by them.

5. In pursuance of Commission resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission, the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries, formerly a subsidiary body of the Commission, was organized as part of the Commission session, with the status of a committee of the whole. The meeting of the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries was held on 24 April 2009 during the senior officials segment.

B. Other activities

6. Pursuant to its approved programme of work,[1] the secretariat produced 70 publications during the period under review. A list of those publications is contained in annex III.

C. Relations with other United Nations programmes

7. The secretariat maintained close and regular liaison with United Nations Headquarters and cooperated with the departments concerned, as well as with the secretariats of the other regional commissions, on projects of common interest.

[1] Biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2008-2009 (*Official Records General Assembly, Sixty-first Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/61/6/Rev.1)) (based on E/ESCAP/63/22).

Chapter III

SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

A. Attendance and organization of work

8. The sixty-fifth session of the Commission was held at the United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, from 23 to 29 April 2009. The session comprised two segments. The senior officials segment was held from 23 to 25 April 2009 and the ministerial segment from 27 to 29 April 2009.

9. The session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members:

Afghanistan
Armenia
Australia
Bangladesh
Bhutan
Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia
China
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Fiji
France
Georgia
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Japan
Kazakhstan
Kiribati
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Malaysia
Maldives
Mongolia
Myanmar
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
New Zealand
Pakistan
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Philippines
Republic of Korea
Russian Federation
Samoa
Singapore
Solomon Islands
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Timor-Leste
Tonga
Turkey
Tuvalu
United States of America
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Viet Nam
Hong Kong, China
Macao, China

10. By virtue of rule 3 of the Commission's rules of procedure,[2] representatives of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Mexico, Romania and Switzerland attended. Representatives of the Holy See also attended.

11. The session was attended by representatives of the following offices of the United Nations Secretariat: Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Regional Commissions New York Office, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Economic Commission for Africa and Economic Commission for Europe.

12. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies attended: International Trade Centre, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Millennium Campaign, United Nations Office for Project Services and United Nations Population Fund.

13. Representatives of the following specialized agencies were present in a consultative capacity: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Telecommunication Union, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and World Meteorological Organization.

14. The following intergovernmental organizations attended as observers: Asian and Pacific Coconut Community, Asian Development Bank, Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia, International Organization for Migration and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

15. Observers were present from the following non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status: Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, Baha'i International Community, Disabled People's International Asia-Pacific Region, International Council on Social Welfare, International Federation of Agricultural Producers, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Movement ATD Fourth World, International Planned Parenthood Federation, International Trade Union Confederation, LDC Watch, Muslim World League, Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association, World Association for Small and Medium Enterprises, World Conference on Religion and Peace, World Veterans Organization and Zonta Club of Bangkok.

16. Representatives of the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also attended the session.

17. The list of participants is given in document E/ESCAP/65/INF/8/Rev.2.

18. In accordance with rule 13 of its rules of procedure, the Commission elected H.E. Mr. Kasit Piromya (Thailand) Chairperson.

[2] Annex V.

19. Following its past practice, the Commission decided to elect the following heads of delegations Vice-Chairpersons:

H.E. Mr. Nazir Ahmad Shahidi (Afghanistan)
H.E. Mr. Mashiur Rahman (Bangladesh)
H.E. Mr. Ly Thuch (Cambodia)
H.E. Mr. Liu Jieyi (China)
H.E. Mr. Joketani Waqanivalu Cokanasiga (Fiji)
H.E. Mr. Lasha Zhvania (Georgia)
H.E. Mr. Kamal Nath (India)
H.E. Mr. Anton Apriyantono (Indonesia)
H.E. Mr. Mohammad Ghasem Hosseini (Islamic Republic of Iran)
H.E. Mr. Nobuhide Minorikawa (Japan)
H.E. Mr. Nurlan Danenov (Kazakhstan)
H.E. Mr. Bounkeut Sangsomsak (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Hon. Ali Hashim (Maldives)
H.E. Major General Htay Oo (Myanmar)
Hon. Aloysius Amwano (Nauru)
Hon. Guna Nidhi Sharma (Nepal)
Hon. Harry Rubasch Fritz (Palau)
H.E. Mr. Segfredo R. Serrano (Philippines)
H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-hoon (Republic of Korea)
H.E. Mr. Alexey N. Borodavkin (Russian Federation)
H.E. Mr. Nickel Lee Hang (Samoa)
Hon. Lotoala Metia (Tuvalu)
H.E. Mr. Bakoa Mariki Kaltongga (Vanuatu)
H.E. Mr. Doan Xuan Hung (Viet Nam).

20. The senior officials segment of the session met in three Committees of the Whole. The following officers were elected:

(a) Committee of the Whole I:

Chairperson

Mr. Yuji Kumamaru (Japan)

Vice-Chairpersons

Mr. Janak Raj Joshi (Nepal)
Daw Aye Aye Mu (Myanmar)

(b) Committee of the Whole II:

Chairperson

H.E. Mr. Majid Bizmark (Islamic Republic of Iran)

Vice-Chairpersons

H.E. Prof. J.B. Disanayaka (Sri Lanka)
Mr. John Walton Wasi (Solomon Islands)

(c) Committee of the Whole III:

Chairperson

Mr. Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan (Bangladesh)

Vice-Chairpersons

Ms. Noumea Simi (Samoa)
Mr. Ghafur A. Dharmaputra (Indonesia).

21. The Commission also constituted a Working Group on Draft Resolutions, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ms. Latha Reddy (India) to consider draft resolutions submitted during the session. Mr. Syed Bakri bin Syed Abdul Rahman (Malaysia) was elected Vice-Chairperson of the Working Group.

B. Agenda

22. The Commission adopted the following agenda:

Senior officials segment

1. Opening of the session:
   (a) Opening addresses;
   (b) Election of officers;
   (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission:
   (a) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development;
   (b) Trade and investment;
   (c) Transport;
   (d) Environment and development;
   (e) Information and communications technology;
   (f) Disaster risk reduction;
   (g) Social development;
   (h) Statistics.
3. Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries:
   (a) The food-fuel-financial crisis and climate change: addressing threats to development;
   (b) Regional cooperation for shared prosperity and social progress;
   (c) Summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to countries with special needs;
   (d) Other matters.
4. Management issues:
   (a) Draft programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011;
   (b) Programme changes for the biennium 2008-2009;
   (c) Strengthening the United Nations development pillar at the regional level: proposed ESCAP subregional offices;

(d) Technical cooperation activities of ESCAP and announcement of intended contributions.

5. Work of the ESCAP regional institutions.

6. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

7. Dates, venue and theme topic for the sixty-sixth session of the Commission.

Ministerial segment

8. Theme topic for the sixty-fifth session: "Towards sustainable agriculture and food security in the Asia-Pacific region".

9. Addressing threats to development: key challenges to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in the Asia-Pacific region:

(a) Addressing the financial crisis and its convergence with other threats to development: towards a stable and supportive financial system for development;

(b) Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region.

10. Other matters.

11. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

C. Account of proceedings

Senior officials segment

23. The senior officials segment of the sixty-fifth session was opened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. The Executive Secretary delivered a welcoming statement.

Ministerial segment

24. The Chairperson of the sixty-fourth session, H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-hoon (Republic of Korea), declared open the ministerial segment of the sixty-fifth session of the Commission. Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Secretary of ESCAP, read out the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and delivered her welcome statement. H.E. Mr. Abhisit Vejjajiva, Prime Minister of Thailand, delivered the inaugural address.

Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations

25. In his message, the Secretary-General thanked the Government of Thailand for their generous support to the United Nations over the years to ESCAP. He complimented ESCAP for focusing on the critical issue of food security and sustainable agriculture, which had assumed increased urgency at this time of economic turmoil. He identified food and fuel insecurity as being part of a triple threat which included the economic crisis and climate change, which needed to be tackled in tandem.

26. The Secretary-General highlighted some of the key outcomes of the G-20 summit, which included the commitment of more than a trillion dollars to deal with the crisis, the reaffirmation of the Millennium Development Goals and the pledge to embark on a green recovery. He called for a truly global stimulus that advanced the interests of all nations. He called for more comprehensive steps to combat the food crisis including improving agricultural production, broadening social protection and ensuring that trade works for the poor.

Welcoming statement of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP

27. The Executive Secretary warmly welcomed all delegates to the sixty-fifth session of the Commission. She expressed her deep appreciation to the Prime Minister for taking time from pressing duties of state to inaugurate the session. On the occasion of sixtieth anniversary of the Commission's presence in Bangkok, the Executive Secretary conveyed her deep gratitude to Thailand for its commitment to the United Nations, and for graciously hosting the Commission, the regional arm of the United Nations, over the preceding 60 years.

28. The Executive Secretary noted that the region faces challenges that are global in scale, and more than ever, required building upon the collective strengths of the Asia-Pacific region to lead and respond. ESCAP was created so that the peoples of Asia Pacific can meet together, hold together and advance together to build a more inclusive, sustainable future with regional solutions to developmental problems.

29. The Executive Secretary noted that the region was facing a triple threat. For millions of people in Asia and the Pacific, the economic crisis was also a food crisis as jobs were lost and earnings disappeared. There was every reason to believe that the preceding year's fuel/food security issues would return once the economic crisis had abated. Climate change threatened to disrupt weather patterns and was expected to further disrupt agriculture and water security across the region.

30. The Executive Secretary emphasized that times of uncertainty could also be times of opportunity. The region's financial stimulus packages and reforms could be used to address systemic imbalances in order to make development more inclusive for the peoples of the region and more caring of the planet. That provided an opportunity to shift thinking from traditional, sectoral, approaches to one that was more integrated, more comprehensive and more coordinated. Food security issues could be addressed by developing the foundations for viable social safety nets in Asia and the Pacific while sustainable farming practices could help address pressing climate change issues. She noted that it was

time to move from individual country strengths to collective regional strengths and to introduce balance back into the economic and social order.

31. The Executive Secretary noted that much progress had been made in transforming the secretariat into a regional hub for compelling analysis, sharing development practices and policy options, and building consensus, norms and standards on a range of economic, social and environmental issues, especially in areas such as organizing debates and dialogues in the region to provide policymakers with timely advice on how to deal with the economic crisis. She also referred to the significant progress in the work of ESCAP on low carbon green growth and the development of a sustainable energy framework for the region. She also noted that the work of ESCAP on the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway Network was critical for regional integration and economic development. The Executive Secretary also referred to the renewed focus of the Social Development Division on social policy and protection issues, in order to set a new social development paradigm for the region.

32. The Executive Secretary expressed her gratitude to the member States for the extraordinary support and encouragement extended to her through increased financial commitment and trust, and for their commitment to making ESCAP strong enough to help drive the development process in Asia and the Pacific. She expressed the view that, through cooperation, the Asia-Pacific region could turn the triple threat into opportunities and emerge a leader in the new global economy, shaping a new multilateral system in an emerging multipolar world.

Inaugural address by the Prime Minister of Thailand

33. The Prime Minister of Thailand extended a warm welcome to all delegates to the sixty-fifth session of the Commission.

34. The Prime Minister reiterated the steadfast commitment of Thailand to multilateralism and its support to the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies. He complimented ESCAP for performing an invaluable role in addressing and responding to the real needs of the people in the region.

35. The Prime Minister welcomed the theme of the current session, "Towards sustainable agriculture and food security in the Asia-Pacific region", and looked forward to the policy recommendations that were expected to emerge from the discussions.

36. On the subject of the financial crisis, the Prime Minister briefed the Commission on his participation at the G-20 summit in London, and noted that, while major economies might bear the immediate brunt of the economic crisis, many emerging and developing economies were feeling the effects in their real sectors. Each crisis provided an opportunity to learn and grow so that lasting and sustainable solutions could be found. The food-fuel crisis highlighted the importance of knowledge sharing and transfer of technology on alternative sources of energy, and of sustainable patterns of consumption.

37. The Prime Minister highlighted the teachings of His Majesty, the King of Thailand, on moderation and living within one's own means. To achieve development that is inclusive and sustainable, weight had to be given to different areas of development in a balanced manner. He reiterated the intention of the Government of Thailand to continue heeding the wisdom of His Majesty and strive to create sustainable social safety nets for the Thai people in the gloomy economic times.

38. The Prime Minister assured the Executive Secretary of the unwavering commitment and support of Thailand to ESCAP and its member States far into the future. He expressed the hope that the sixty-fifth session of the Commission would yield satisfactory outcomes, and show that the region had the required strength and unity to overcome the crisis and attain inclusive and sustainable development for all.

Agenda item 2
Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission

Sub-item (a)
Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development

39. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Recent macroeconomic developments and other issues to be raised at the first session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development" (E/ESCAP/65/1). The secretariat sought the guidance of the Commission on the issues to be discussed at the first session of the Committee, to be held in early September 2009.

40. The Commission noted the immediate and long-term impacts of the global financial crisis on countries in the region. While all countries had experienced the effects of the global crisis, the degree of impact had varied depending on the level of exposure to the global economy. Impacts on countries had included declines in growth, reductions in export demand, lower levels of production in the manufacturing and agricultural sectors and declines in international credit flows to domestic private sectors to support investment and growth. Nevertheless, the Commission observed that policy measures undertaken by many countries in the region following the 1997 Asian economic crisis had served to reduce the economic impact of the current crisis, to the benefit of those countries.

41. The Commission was briefed on the experiences of countries in terms of the adverse impact of the global financial crisis and slowdown on employment, poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Commission was informed that reduced demand for overseas migrant

workers would add to the problem of unemployment in some countries.

42. The Commission noted that countries in the region had undertaken a host of policy measures to lessen the impact of the global financial crisis. In particular, many countries had adopted fiscal stimulus packages through a combination of Government spending, tax reduction and measures to support the private sector. The stimulus packages and policies had particularly targeted labour-intensive projects that supported employment, promoting a resilient financial sector and maintenance of credit flows to ensure an inclusive and sustainable recovery from the crisis.

43. The Commission also recognized the favourable policy responses initiated by countries to mitigate the adverse impact of the global financial crisis and slowdown on poverty reduction and inclusive development. Those policy responses included the generation of employment, the strengthening of social safety nets, the reprioritization of development projects with high multiplier impact and employment creation, and improved coordination among various levels of government.

44. The Commission urged global coordination of macroeconomic policies to combat the financial crisis, given the integration of most countries in the region in the global financial system. The international community should jointly undertake measures to enhance liquidity in international money and credit markets, support cross-border capital flows to ensure investment and growth, upgrade the international financial architecture, and improve the international financial regulatory and supervisory framework. Given the climate of reduced international liquidity, some delegations urged developed countries to remain committed to their development aid commitments.

45. One delegation suggested that the understanding and capacity of countries in the region in responding to the crisis and strengthening efforts in poverty reduction should be enhanced through policy dialogue, capacity-building, institutional strengthening and human resources development.

46. The same delegation requested that the secretariat identify and formulate a workable South-South cooperation mechanism and facilitate the study and sharing of best practices with regard to inclusive growth for poverty reduction.

47. For the first session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development, the Commission expressed general support for the main theme of the impact of the global financial crisis and slowdown on poverty and inclusive development in countries of the region, and policy responses and options. One delegation suggested that the first session of the Committee could focus on issues which would require immediate attention to overcome the ongoing financial crisis effectively, including:

(a) The urgent need to enhance liquidity in international money and credit markets;

(b) The stepping up of cross-border capital flows to support investment and growth;

(c) Remedial measures that balanced the need for tightening financial regulation and supervision and innovation;

(d) The implications for the Asia-Pacific region of the action plan emerging from the G-20 initiative.[3]

48. The Commission adopted resolution 65/4 on the strengthening of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific.

Sub-item (b)
Trade and investment

49. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/2 on regional trade and investment: trends, issues and ESCAP responses and document E/ESCAP/65/3, which contained the end-of-decade report on the implementation of Commission resolution 56/1 on the Decade of Greater Mekong Subregion Development Cooperation, 2000-2009.

50. The Commission was informed that the first session of the Committee on Trade and Investment would be held in Bangkok from 4 to 6 November 2009 with the central theme of regional trade- and investment-led recovery from the global economic crisis.

51. One delegation, while endorsing the need for technical assistance in the area of trade and investment, pointed out that ESCAP, as the regional hub of the United Nations, should focus on the areas which could be most effectively addressed through regional cooperation and where ESCAP had a comparative advantage, including policy coordination and norm-setting and the development of viable policy options for its members and associate members. Another delegation emphasized the importance of public-private partnerships in regional projects and, in that regard, suggested that the Asia-Pacific Business Forum be organized in conjunction with the Commission session.

52. The Commission recognized the importance of trade and investment in addressing the triple crisis, alleviating poverty, and reviving economic growth and development. In that regard, the Commission emphasized the need to keep economies open and refrain from protectionist measures and the abuse of trade remedies. In particular, the Commission recognized the role of the multilateral trading system in promoting global trade and the importance of a swift and successful conclusion of the Doha Development

[3] Declaration of the Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy, held in Washington D.C., 15 November 2008 (www.g20.org/Documents/g20_summit_declaration.pdf).

Agenda negotiations, which would send a positive signal to business. One delegation observed that the Doha Development Agenda had entered a hiatus but had not yet failed. In order for the Agenda to be successful, the right political signals were needed, while national interests, especially those of developing countries, needed to be safeguarded. One delegation called for close regional cooperation to conclude the Agenda, while another called for the secretariat to continue its technical assistance to help countries to accede to the World Trade Organization on an equal and fair basis.

53. The Commission noted the importance of South-South regional economic cooperation and integration for crisis management and long-term economic development. One delegation noted that integration into the global market and financial system could lead to increased vulnerability to external shocks and, therefore, a common approach to address trade and investment issues was necessary. Another delegation pointed out that enhanced intraregional trade would reduce the dependence of Asian and Pacific economies on Western markets.

54. The Commission noted the unilateral initiative of India to extend duty-free access on 94 per cent of its tariff lines originating from least developed countries, which had been initiated on 13 August 2008 in fulfilment of the Ministerial Declaration of the Sixth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, held in Hong Kong, China, in 2005,[4] to four least developed countries in the region. Others could also avail themselves of those benefits by submitting their letters of intent.

55. The Commission noted the view of two delegations that the conclusion of regional and bilateral trade agreements constituted an important complementary track to the multilateral trading system by promoting regional trade and by forming a buffer against external shocks. One delegation mentioned that such agreements currently constituted a quarter of its country's total trade. Another delegation called for increased technical and financial assistance aimed at helping countries to promote bilateral trade.

56. In that context, two delegations mentioned the revitalized Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) as an important modality for strengthening regional economic integration and noted with appreciation the current efforts of APTA members and the secretariat to deepen commitments and expand coverage into the areas of trade facilitation, services, investment and non-tariff measures under the fourth round of negotiations under the Agreement, and to expand its membership. They called on the secretariat to continue its active support of the Agreement.

57. The Commission recognized the importance of trade facilitation in enhancing economic cooperation and competitiveness. In that context, the delegation of China acknowledged the substantial and fruitful work of ESCAP in the area of trade and investment facilitation in recent years and emphasized its willingness to work closely with ESCAP and other member countries in that area. The delegation also referred to the successful Regional Expert Group Meeting on Trade and Transport Facilitation for Export Competitiveness, which had been held in Yangzhou, China, in September 2008 and had achieved constructive results.

58. Two delegations emphasized the importance of aid for trade facilitation for developing countries of the region. Some delegations recommended that ESCAP continue to provide capacity-building and technical assistance for trade facilitation, and support regional cooperation efforts and initiatives aimed at alleviating supply-side capacity constraints for trade, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. Enhanced cooperation between customs authorities and other institutions connected with trade was also highlighted as an important area, along with the need for transparency in trade regulations and their enforcement.

59. Some delegations stressed the importance of trade finance facilitation, suggesting that ESCAP, in cooperation with global and regional financial institutions, should support regional cooperation to facilitate the financing of trade and investment activities, focusing in particular on those sectors most affected by the crisis and those that were directly related to sustainable and inclusive economic development, such as the food and agriculture and energy sectors.

60. The Commission recognized the importance of a competitive business environment for success in the highly competitive world of international trade. In that regard, one delegation noted the importance of regulatory mechanisms which would ensure sound business practices, prudent financial management and the prevention of anti-competitive behaviour.

61. The Commission noted with appreciation the various initiatives which had been implemented for the development of the Greater Mekong Subregion and called for those initiatives to be continued. The delegation of Japan informed the Commission that, in order to promote further exchanges between Japan and countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion, it had been decided at the Japan-Mekong Foreign Ministers' Meeting in January 2008 to celebrate the year 2009 as the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year. In that context, the delegation also informed the Commission that Japan was currently exploring the possibility of jointly organizing a seminar or workshop with ESCAP on a theme relevant to the Mekong-Japan Exchange Year.

62. The delegation of Thailand informed the Commission of its country's active participation in various initiatives related to Greater Mekong Subregion development, such as the Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS), the Greater Mekong Subregion programme and the Mekong-Japan Cooperation, and its role as a donor for projects in the areas of infrastructure development,

[4] World Trade Organization, document WT/MIN(05)/DEC. Available from http://docsonline.wto.org.

training and logistics development. Thailand, along with other Greater Mekong Subregion countries, had also made concerted efforts to reduce non-physical barriers through the Greater Mekong Subregion Cross-Border Transport Agreement.[5] Thailand also welcomed the further involvement of ESCAP in the various Greater Mekong Subregion frameworks. The delegation confirmed the readiness of Thailand to host the ACMECS Senior Officials Meeting with Development Partners in 2009, with the aim of discussing possible areas of cooperation and further assistance from development partners in development projects, and it invited ESCAP to participate in the meeting.

Sub-item (c)
Transport

63. The Commission had before it the report of the Committee on Transport on its first session (E/ESCAP/65/4) and the report on the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011) (E/ESCAP/65/5).

64. The Commission noted the importance of transport in accelerating economic and social development and facilitating regional integration.

65. The Commission expressed general support for the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Transport on its first session, and requested that the secretariat consider implementing the recommendations in the context of the current and future programmes of work of the secretariat.

66. The Commission noted that the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport would be convened in Bangkok from 14 to 18 December 2009.

67. The Commission expressed satisfaction with the forthcoming entry into force of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network[6] on 11 June 2009. Some delegations highlighted the role of the Trans-Asian Railway network, together with the Asian Highway network, in the ongoing development of Euro-Asian transport linkages and in providing improved transit opportunities. Some delegations informed the Commission of the development and upgrading of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway infrastructure in their countries and subregions which were designed to improve transport connectivity with neighbouring countries within the framework of national priorities.

68. One delegation requested that the secretariat continue to organize the demonstration runs of container block trains along the Trans-Asian Railway network, including the northern corridor.

69. One delegation proposed that the secretariat continue its work on intermodal transport corridors and logistics centres, including dry ports.

70. Some delegations reiterated the important role of transport facilitation in smoothing the movement of goods and people. The delegations of China and the Russian Federation expressed appreciation for the secretariat's support to the formulation and negotiation of the Agreement between the Governments of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Facilitation of International Road Transport. In that regard, one delegation held the view that the Agreement was an important element in the system of Euro-Asian transport linkages.

71. The Commission noted the outcome Declaration from the Ministerial Conference on Global Environment and Energy in Transport (MEET), held in Tokyo on 15 and 16 January 2009,[7] and welcomed the offer of Japan to further strengthen partnerships with other member countries in promoting low-carbon and low-pollution transport systems.

72. One delegation requested that the secretariat identify cooperative approaches to studying affordable alternative fuels for transport which did not conflict with the basic principles of maintaining sustainable agricultural practices, food supply and protecting the environment.

73. The Commission noted the importance of public-private partnerships in developing transport infrastructure and logistics, and some delegations expressed support for the secretariat's work in that area.

74. The delegation of Indonesia informed the Commission that the proposed Ministerial Conference on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific had been rescheduled to 2010.

75. Following a suggestion of the Committee on Transport at its first session (see E/ESCAP/65/4, para. 4), one delegation requested that the secretariat include transport in rural areas in its future work programme.

76. Some delegations stressed the importance of improving road safety in the region and informed the Commission of their national initiatives, policies and measures to reduce road accidents. In that regard, the delegation of the Russian Federation informed the Commission that the First Global High-Level Ministerial Conference on Road Safety was scheduled to be held in Moscow from 19 to 20 November 2009 and encouraged members and associate members to participate at the highest possible level.

Sub-item (d)
Environment and development

77. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Turning crisis into opportunity: greening economic recovery strategies" (E/ESCAP/65/6), the report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience

[5] See www.adb.org/GMS/agreement.asp.
[6] Commission resolution 62/4 of 12 April 2006, annex.
[7] See www.mlit.go.jp/kokusai/MEET/documents/Ministerial_Declaration.pdf.

Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (E/ESCAP/65/INF/4) and the report of the Mekong River Commission (E/ESCAP/65/INF/5).

78. The Commission noted that green recovery strategies, which included the Global Green New Deal, referred to recently by the Secretary-General, had been actively promoted by United Nations agencies, and called on world leaders to consider a massive redirection of investment away from unsustainable production and consumption patterns into job-creating programmes that restore the natural systems underpinning the global economy. Such strategies had been replicated by several countries in the ESCAP region.

79. A number of delegations expressed their support for the prospect of turning the current financial crisis into an opportunity towards a low carbon development path and the achievement of sustainable development. Several delegations shared the policies and measures that had been taken in that regard in their countries at the national level. One delegation emphasized that energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable economies would become a driving force for growth. The delegation of Japan informed the Commission that the recently proposed Growth Initiative towards Doubling the Size of Asia's Economy and the Cool Earth Partnership would assist countries in the region in building a low-carbon society.

80. Several delegations highlighted the importance of further promotion of regional cooperation for linking economic recovery and sustainable development. One delegation suggested that the secretariat should consider actions in a number of concrete areas, such as the promotion of green industry and green tourism, especially for small and medium enterprises, enhancing the implementation of economic and fiscal measures for green economic growth, the creation of environmentally friendly markets and services, the introduction of green procurement and the standardization of goods and services for the promotion of sustainable consumption.

81. The delegation of the Philippines informed the Commission that its country would be hosting the International Conference on Green Industry in Asia, to be organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, ESCAP and the United Nations Environment Programme in Manila in September 2009. The conference would focus on how industries in the region could effectively manage the transition to resource-efficient and low-carbon industry and in the process sustain economic growth and trade competitiveness.

82. The Commission expressed its appreciation to Kazakhstan for its offers to host the sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development for Asia and the Pacific in 2010, and the seventh Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in 2011 with the theme of "A green economy for the conservation of ecosystems, including river basins", and emphasized the importance of bridging regional sustainable development processes in those two regions.

83. One delegation noted that strategic pro-poor investment to ease the economic crisis should encourage the integration of rural and urban economies and that, while urban growth and development were important, renewed focus was also needed on rural development.

84. A number of delegations shared their countries' national action plans and strategies in addressing climate change and sustainable development. The Commission noted the need for greater capacity-building, technology transfer and financing.

85. One delegation stressed that climate change was permanently displacing its vulnerable people, leading to increased out-migration from affected areas and a consequent surge in squatters and slum dwellers who were without physical, financial, psychological or social security.

86. The Commission noted that some delegations were encouraging improved solid waste management through the use of advanced technologies and through principles such as 3R (reduce, reuse, recycle). One delegation informed the Commission that the potential for clean development mechanism projects was negligible for smaller countries as they lacked the skilled manpower to prepare the technical documents required, and stressed the need for capacity-building initiatives. The same delegation called for the establishment of a regional fund for least developed countries and vulnerable countries to address climate change actions beyond 2012.

87. One delegation emphasized the importance for all countries to address climate change, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and in support of sustainable development. One delegation stated its support for the development of a new post-Kyoto regime at the end of 2009. Another delegation cautioned the secretariat that any work related to climate change should fall within the existing mandates.

88. One delegation underlined the achievements of the North-East Asia Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation, including the development of a transboundary mechanism for the protection of endangered species in North-East Asia.

89. Several delegations emphasized the importance of strengthening the agricultural sector and food security in coping with the financial crisis and encouraged stronger cooperation between ESCAP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in that respect. Some delegations pointed out the need to adopt the approach of integrated water resources management and river basin management as part of the efforts towards greening economic recovery and generating jobs.

90. One delegation supported workable regional cooperation initiatives to enhance the capacity of the agriculture industry to meet food security needs and incorporate sustainability principles.

Sub-item (e)
Information and communications technology

91. The Commission had before it the report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology on its first session (E/ESCAP/65/7) and the summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions relating to information and communications technology (E/ESCAP/65/8).

92. The Commission recognized the important role played by information and communications technology (ICT), including space-based technology, in supporting inclusive and sustainable economic and social development and in ensuring effective disaster management in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission noted the progress of its member States in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,[8] and recognized the necessity of strengthening regional cooperation to assist its member States in human resources development and capacity-building. In that connection, the Commission expressed its general support for the findings and recommendations of the Committee and requested the secretariat to consider implementing the recommendations in the context of the current and future programmes of work of the secretariat.

93. One delegation noted that, given the global financial and economic crisis, the development of the ICT sector was of great importance in achieving high economic growth in the long term. Some delegations also expressed their commitment and continued support to the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee, in particular enhanced international cooperation, in that regard. One delegation appreciated the role of ICT for food security and requested the secretariat to report on the progress of cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other agencies in that regard.

94. In building an information society, the Commission recognized the importance of ICT human resources development and the important role of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT). Several delegations requested that the capacity development programmes of APCICT, including the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders, be implemented effectively. One delegation supported the recommendation of the Committee for the development of a new module on ICT for disaster risk reduction (see E/ESCAP/65/7, para. 17) as well as the development of cooperation with the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) Regional Office for East Asia, which would be opened in Songdo International City, Republic of Korea, in August 2009.

95. The delegation of India offered to share India's ICT expertise and experience in the development of ICT with other member States and to cooperate with the secretariat in such areas as multi-purpose community e-centres, Pacific connectivity, human resources development, implementation of the *Regional Action Plan towards the Information Society in Asia and the Pacific*,[9] facilitating private-public partnerships, and initiatives on ICT applications for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It also announced its decision to provide financial support to APCICT.

96. One delegation informed the Commission that the leaders of the Pacific Island Forum had agreed in their communiqué that ICT was a priority. It was noted that lack of ICT capacity and expertise continued to be a major challenge in the Pacific. In that context, the delegation appreciated the support provided by APCICT, in cooperation with the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission, in building ICT capacity through the organization of training workshops in the Cook Islands in 2008 and in Tonga in 2009. The delegation requested APCICT to continue its assistance in ICT capacity development for the Pacific island countries.

97. Some delegations highlighted the importance of ICT industry development, ICT applications, including space-based applications, such as e-commerce/ e-business, e-government, e-tourism, e-health, e-literacy and e-agriculture, for sustainable socio-economic development, and relevant supporting components such as enabling policy, human resources development, infrastructure development, information security and knowledge-sharing. The delegation of the Russian Federation informed the Commission of various initiatives that its country had been implementing to support public-private partnerships in ICT, such as an investment fund of $1 billion set up in 2007 to promote small businesses, the establishment of electronic centres in remote areas through the system of post offices to provide Internet access and the creation of industrial parks. According to the adopted national strategy on ICT development, it was expected that the Russian Federation would be among the top 20 ICT-capable countries by 2015.

98. The Commission recognized the critical role of ICT, including space-based technology, in disaster risk reduction efforts. Several delegations called for strengthened partnership and cooperative mechanisms in developing an integrated ICT-based information system for disaster risk management and enhanced regional cooperation, especially in the area of regional early warning and information-sharing. The delegation of Japan cited initiatives promoted by its country, such as the Global Flood Alert System aimed at reducing

[8] The Declaration of Principles and the Geneva Plan of Action (A/C.2/59/3, annex) and the Tunis Commitment and Tunis Agenda (see A/60/687).

[9] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.II.F.20.

damage caused by water-related disaster hazards and Sentinel Asia coordinated by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). The delegation also updated the Commission on cooperation between ESCAP and JAXA in promoting space-based information and products for disaster management through Sentinel Asia. The delegation of Thailand informed the Commission of the launching of an earth observation satellite, THEOS, and the country's readiness to provide satellite data for disaster monitoring and mitigation.

99. Several delegations emphasized the need for establishing a structure/mechanism to assist implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society at both the national and the regional levels, to monitor related initiatives and identify gaps and challenges and cooperation needs at the regional level. Those issues could be addressed through a regional mechanism such as an inter-agency working group. Those delegations also requested that the secretariat assist countries in establishing such a structure at the national level where none existed.

Sub-item (f)
Disaster risk reduction

100. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/9 containing the report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its first session and document E/ESCAP/65/10, entitled "Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 64/2 on regional cooperation in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters in Asia and the Pacific". The Commission also had before it two information notes relating to disaster risk reduction: the report of the Typhoon Committee (E/ESCAP/65/INF/2) and the report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones (E/ESCAP/65/INF/3).

101. The Commission recognized that the Asia-Pacific region was the most disaster-prone region in the world and noted the importance of disaster risk reduction for achieving development goals in the region. Several delegations commended ESCAP for the establishment and successful convening of the first session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, including the organization of the High-level Round Table on Regional Cooperation for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Commission expressed general support for the findings and recommendations of the Committee and requested the secretariat to consider implementing the recommendations in the context of the current and future work programmes of the secretariat.

102. Some delegations recognized the important role of ESCAP in providing a regional cooperation platform for the sharing of experience, knowledge and information in disaster risk reduction, disaster management, and disaster relief and recovery, and facilitating the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action[10] to enhance the capacity of the countries in disaster risk reduction. They supported the work of the secretariat in those areas.

103. Several delegations emphasized the importance of fulfilling the request made by the Committee for the secretariat to further enhance partnerships with the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and other United Nations entities, as well as with regional and subregional organizations (see E/ESCAP/65/9, para. 4). One delegation informed the Commission of the development of the Global Flood Alert System by a centre under the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and said that it would welcome the collaboration of the secretariat with the centre.

104. Another delegation also expressed interest in the establishment under the auspices of ESCAP of international cooperation among United Nations agencies and with other relevant bodies. The delegation also noted the important role of the United Nations Development Programme in that area as a major operational agency within the United Nations system. It reiterated its full support for cooperation among countries on the implementation of the outcomes of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction of 2005[11] and the Third Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction of 2008,[12] and also expressed support for the cooperation of the secretariat with the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery.

105. The Commission noted the concern expressed by some delegations regarding the increasing threat of natural disasters such as flooding, landslides and sinking islands as a result of climate change in the Pacific, and the importance of capacity-building in preparedness and the development of policies and action plans for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. One delegation, on behalf of the Pacific subregion, noted the minimal recognition of the situation in the Pacific in the Committee's recommendations and requested the secretariat to assist in the expansion of activities and regional cooperative frameworks on disaster risk reduction, such as Sentinel Pacific.

106. One delegation emphasized the importance of discussing financial risk transfer mechanisms for dealing with the consequences of disasters, such as disaster insurance and the pooling of risks, and suggested that member States share their experiences and methods to find ways of increasing awareness in societies to attain a higher penetration ratio. It further suggested that those issues be addressed by the Commission in its future work.

107. One delegation expressed the view that the further work of the secretariat should be directed

[10] A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.
[11] See A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1.
[12] The Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia 2008 (see http://www.amcdrrmalaysia.com.my/docs/Final%20Kuala%20Lumpur%20Declaration.pdf).

towards the creation of effective regional systems for disaster risk reduction which would be aligned with the global structure of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. The delegation also noted that, in its work, the secretariat should make use of existing regional and national mechanisms and capacities in the prevention of natural disasters.

108. The delegation of Japan informed the Commission that cooperation in disaster management would be implemented to support the efforts of the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in response to large-scale disasters. The cooperation included a new contribution of $13 million for the ASEAN-Japan Integration Fund aimed at building a stockpile for mutual assistance relief within ASEAN, out of which approximately $6 million would be used for the development of disaster information and telecommunications in ASEAN member States and capacity-building in the assessment and analysis of disasters for 300 trainees over the next five years.

109. The delegation of Thailand proposed using its emergency telephone number, 192, set up to coordinate concerned agencies and allow immediate response in affected areas, as a regional natural disaster alert number to raise awareness and reduce impacts of disasters in the region.

110. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran informed the Commission that the necessary executive measures for the establishment of an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communications and space technology-enabled disaster management had been taken and that the Government was ready to host the centre and allocate the necessary resources for it to address natural hazards such as earthquakes, floods, drought and typhoons.

111. The delegation of China expressed sincere appreciation for the assistance provided by the international community, including ESCAP member States, in the aftermath of the Wenchuan earthquake, and it expressed its appreciation for the visit of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP to the affected area following the catastrophic earthquake.

112. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center supported the recommendation of the High-level Round Table on Regional Cooperation for Disaster Risk Reduction for the issuance of an Asia-Pacific disaster report (see E/ESCAP/65/9, annex I, para. 17) and the request of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction that proactive action be taken to establish an Asia-Pacific gateway on disaster risk reduction and development (see E/ESCAP/65/9, para. 9), and it pledged continued partnership with ESCAP, including for the implementation of those important and challenging projects.

113. The representative of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also expressed the hope that, through the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, more joint efforts could be brought to bear to address the humanitarian consequences of disasters and the influences of climate change.

114. The Commission adopted resolution 65/5 on the review of the operational details of the feasibility study for the establishment of an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communication and space technology-enabled disaster management in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Sub-item (g)
Social development

115. The Commission had before it the report of the Committee on Social Development on its first session (E/ESCAP/65/11) and the summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to social development issues (E/ESCAP/65/12).

116. The Commission expressed concern over the impact of the financial crisis on the well-being of people in the region, especially the poor and other vulnerable groups, including women. One delegation also noted that the crisis had led to the emergence of new vulnerable groups, such as laid-off workers, new graduates and low-income citizens. The Commission also recognized that migrants would be among the groups most affected by the crisis. In that connection, the Commission was informed of a policy dialogue on the impact of the global economic crisis on international migration that ESCAP and the International Organization for Migration were planning to organize in May 2009.

117. Several delegations informed the Commission of social protection schemes in their countries, such as employment guarantee schemes and conditional cash transfers, as well as initiatives that their Governments had taken to mitigate the impacts of the financial crisis, especially with regard to vulnerable groups, including women and older persons. It was noted that the strengthening of social protection needed to be a priority.

118. One delegation requested that the secretariat provide policy options and strategies for addressing the negative impacts of the financial crisis on social dimensions. Another delegation requested that the secretariat play a larger role in facilitating the sharing of experiences among the countries of the region with regard to dealing with the impacts of the financial crisis and achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

119. Some delegations expressed support for Commission resolution 63/8 on sustainable financing towards achieving universal health-care coverage in Asia and the Pacific, and noted the need to mitigate high out-of-pocket expenditures for healthcare. Some delegations noted that issues of maternal mortality, as well as maternal and child health, continued to be of great concern. One delegation called for further studies to be conducted on building partnerships among

Governments, the private sector and financial institutions in Asia and the Pacific to finance health-care coverage.

120. Several delegations informed the Commission about measures taken for gender mainstreaming and achieving gender equality. One delegation noted that resource allocations for women and children needed to be strengthened and that indicators to measure such progress should be made available. Some delegations pointed out the importance of eliminating violence against women. One delegation recommended that the secretariat conduct further research and strengthen the collection of data to promote gender equality.

121. In view of the transition to an ageing society, some delegations noted the need to develop appropriate ageing readiness interventions to help countries to cope with population ageing. In that regard, one delegation stressed the need to undertake a gender-sensitive approach to population ageing.

122. One delegation reiterated the crucial role of family planning for reducing population growth and making sustainable progress towards achieving inclusive social development. The Commission was informed of the significant progress accomplished by the region towards the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[13] and noted the considerable challenges and gaps that remained to be addressed for the region to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

123. One delegation suggested that ESCAP submit a regional report summarizing progress made by countries in the region to the General Assembly during the one-day event being organized to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development in October 2009.

124. Several delegations stressed the need for ESCAP to continue collecting data and conducting research on various aspects of population dynamics, in particular on international migration and ageing. One delegation noted the increased role of ESCAP in collecting information on international migration, undertaking research and serving as a platform for dialogue within its existing mandate.

125. Some delegations emphasized the importance of establishing and expanding social safety nets and protection schemes for socially vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities. The schemes mentioned by the delegations ranged from the promotion of employment for persons with disabilities in the general labour market and the provision to such persons of supplementary income, to the provision of services to enhance the access of children with disabilities to educational opportunities.

126. Some delegations commended the work of ESCAP in promoting the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action: Towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific,[14] and stated that it had given much impetus to the establishment of national and subregional disability strategies and effective institutional arrangements for their implementation. They recommended that ESCAP continue its work to strengthen policy and institutional mechanisms at the national and subregional levels. In addition, the representative of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat requested the assistance of ESCAP in the organization of the Ministerial Meeting on Disability to be held later in 2009.

127. The Commission noted that the Republic of Korea had expressed its willingness to host the high-level intergovernmental meeting in 2012 to conclude the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, in conjunction with its organization of the Rehabilitation International World Congress and the General Assembly of the Asia-Pacific Disability Forum.

128. The Commission expressed general support for the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Social Development on its first session, and requested that the secretariat consider implementing the recommendations in the context of the current and future programmes of work of the secretariat.

129. The Commission adopted resolution 65/3 on the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012.

Sub-item (h)
Statistics

130. The Commission had before it the report of the Committee on Statistics on its first session (E/ESCAP/65/13). Some delegations noted that the inaugural session of the re-established Committee on Statistics had been particularly successful in terms of attendance, substantive outcomes and organization. The Commission expressed general support for the findings and recommendations of the Committee on Statistics at its first session and requested the secretariat to consider implementing the recommendations in the context of the current and future programmes of work of the secretariat.

131. Emphasizing the importance of official statistics for development, some delegations requested that the secretariat continue providing technical assistance in statistics to developing countries of the region. The delegation of China reconfirmed that its country would be contributing $4 million over a period of five years, through the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, for a South-South cooperation programme of statistical

[13] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[14] E/ESCAP/APDDP/4/Rev.1 (see also Commission resolution 59/3 of 4 September 2003).

capacity-building in China and other developing economies of the region. That was in addition to its annual $40,000 contribution to the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP).

132. One delegation recommended that ESCAP act as a repository of initiatives taken by member States on measuring the progress of societies. However, it emphasized that the secretariat should not become a regional focal point for the Global Project on Measuring the Progress of Societies. Regarding producing population estimates and improving vital statistics, the delegation suggested that, before the vital registration system could be further improved, an alternative successful approach based on sample registration methods should be considered. The same delegation offered to share its country's experience in that regard with other countries.

133. The secretariat informed the Commission that the intersessional Bureau of the Committee on Statistics had begun its work pursuant to its terms of reference adopted by the Committee at its first session. The Bureau had decided to follow up on the recommendations by, for example, elaborating procedures for the election of future Bureau members; setting up a technical advisory group; developing a regional programme to improve vital statistics; and organizing a regional forum for health authorities, registrars-general and national statisticians.[15]

134. The Commission recognized the unique and important role that SIAP played in the development of statistical capacity in the region by providing practical training in official statistics. One delegation requested that the secretariat increase its statistical technical cooperation efforts in the Pacific region. Noting that many countries of the region had not improved their statistical systems to a satisfactory level, the representative of Japan stressed the need for SIAP to strengthen its training activities. He urged other members and associate members to implement the SIAP-related recommendations of the first session of the Committee on Statistics and to increase their sense of ownership of the Institute to ensure the maintenance of the institutional framework and training operations. One delegation stressed the importance of the training needs assessment and requested that the questionnaire be sent directly to the national statistical offices for timely completion and return.

135. One delegation stressed the benefits of wider networking among national training institutes and SIAP in designing statistical training modules. Two other delegations recommended that ESCAP, and SIAP in particular, should strengthen its cooperation with subregional organizations engaged in statistical capacity-building, for example, the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States. One delegation suggested that ESCAP should further cooperate with ECO member countries in statistical training and knowledge-sharing.

136. The representative of India informed the Commission that its national statistical training institute, the National Academy of Statistical Administration, was already supporting training in official statistics in the member countries of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and selected African countries and was prepared to collaborate with other statistical training institutes, including SIAP. One delegation suggested that it would be cost-effective for SIAP to organize more subregional training programmes in collaboration with national training institutes.

137. Some delegations stressed the importance of sharing statistical information, including information to serve the functioning of other ESCAP committees. One of those delegations suggested that, as a first step, a list of statistical information collected by member countries should be compiled and categorized. Another delegation suggested that ESCAP should give priority to summarizing and analysing the statistical information from the region.

138. The Commission adopted resolution 65/2 on regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific.

Agenda item 3
Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries

Sub-item (a)
The food-fuel-financial crisis and climate change: addressing threats to development

139. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/15 entitled "The food-fuel-financial crisis and climate change: addressing threats to development" and the Bali Outcome Document (E/ESCAP/65/15/Add.1).

140. A High-Level Exchange on "The food-fuel-financial crisis and climate change: addressing threats to development" was organized as a part of the discussions and deliberations under agenda item 3 (a). The objective of the panel discussion was to share diverse country experiences in addressing the triple crisis. The panel drew the attention of the Commission to the issues associated with the crisis, actions taken by the Governments to mitigate the impacts, and the way forward, especially in the area of regional cooperation.

141. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP introduced the two secretariat documents and moderated the panel, which was followed by an open discussion and statements from the floor.

142. The Commission noted that the impact of the food and fuel crisis varied greatly among the least developed and landlocked developing countries of Asia and the Pacific. Some of those countries were net

[15] See E/ESCAP/65/13, paras. 6 and 7, and decisions 1/1, para. 3, and 1/2, subpara. (b).

exporters of food. Others, such as the least developed of the small island developing States, imported most of their food since their limited land mass, infertile soil and inadequate supply of water limited opportunities for agricultural production.

143. For countries that were net importers of food, the increase in international prices affected not only the domestic price of food but also its supply. The rise in spending on food at both the household and national levels subsequently compressed consumption of other items. As a result of volatility in commodity prices, inflation had risen sharply in many of those countries before declining in recent months. Subsidies to minimize the immediate impact of the rise in food prices had a significant impact on the fiscal budget in other countries. While the increase in food prices had exacerbated the hardship of its urban population, one delegation noted that such prices also increased demand for locally produced traditional food crops.

144. In countries that were commodity exporters, however, the fall in the prices of products derived from agriculture, fishery, forestry and non-renewable resources had an adverse impact on export earnings as well as fiscal balance.

145. To address the issue of high food prices, one delegation expressed its support for the recommendations of the High-level Regional Policy Dialogue on "The food-fuel crisis and climate change: reshaping the development agenda", held in Bali, Indonesia, on 9 and 10 December 2008, with respect to the role of regional cooperation in addressing the financial crisis and ensuring food security, sustainable agriculture and energy security.

146. Some delegations expressed the view that greater investment in agricultural production was necessary to attain food security, and that renewed focus should be placed on the expansion of traditional food crops and livestock as well as on the development of new agricultural products. To address the cost of imported food, one delegation informed the Commission that its country had established a food crisis task force to review import arrangements, including freight charges and import tariffs.

147. Some delegations reiterated the need for continued technical assistance, as well as research and development to strengthen the agricultural sectors in the least developed and landlocked developing countries. One delegation noted that partnerships between agricultural research centres had special significance with regard to assisting in the sharing of relevant knowledge and technologies.

148. The Commission was also informed by one delegation that the G8 Leaders Statement on Global Food Security adopted at the Hokkaido Toyako Summit, held in Toyako, Japan, from 7 to 9 July 2008, renewed their commitment with regard to increasing assistance and investment in agriculture, removing export restrictions and accelerating development and commercialization of sustainable second-generation biofuels.[16] In line with that statement, the ministers of agriculture of the G8 countries underlined their support for the establishment of a global partnership for agriculture and food security at their meeting held in Cison di Valmarino, Italy, from 18 to 20 April 2009.[17]

149. In relation to the fuel crisis, the Commission was informed that the increase in the price of petroleum products had led to an increase in foreign exchange outflow, higher prices of goods owing to increased production and transport costs, and rises in the price of essential commodities. One delegation expressed the view that in least developed countries that are small islands, imported fuel was critical for the functioning of fisheries, which was the largest source of employment, as well as for the provision of potable water through desalination.

150. Some delegations noted that in a number of least developed countries that were net importers of fuel, setting fuel prices at market levels also required policymakers to take into consideration the need to provide disadvantaged groups with fuel at subsidized levels. The provision of such subsidies, however, had led to a significant rise in Government expenditures at a time when revenues were decreasing, and consequently reduced Government spending on development activities.

151. Several delegations recognized the importance of alternative fuels and renewable energy, including bioenergy, in reducing dependency on energy imports and energy prices. Some countries recognized the importance of renewable energy to support energy security or actions to tackle climate change.

152. One delegation called for assistance to develop alternative sources of energy through South-South cooperation for the benefit of least developed countries, especially those that were small islands. The Commission was informed that a regional mechanism was being created to purchase fuel in bulk, as well as to strengthen regulations in the Pacific to reduce fuel costs.

153. One delegation from a landlocked developing country expressed its appreciation to the Commission for the implementation of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia and the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,[18] which had enabled the development of land and maritime links to facilitate transport between Asia and Europe.

[16] See www.mofa.go.jp/policy/economy/summit/2008/doc/doc080709_04_en.html.

[17] See www.g8agricultureministersmeeting.mipaaf.com.

[18] *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003* (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.

154. Some delegations reported that remittances had declined.

155. The delegation of Kiribati informed the Commission of a steep decline in the value of its Trust Fund, which was invested in various stocks. The situation had reduced the country's ability to fund critical social programmes.

156. The Commission was informed by the delegation of Maldives of the range of new challenges it would face with the removal of trade and development preferences after graduation from least developed country status. It called for international partners to work with countries graduating from least developed country status to design and implement an effective transition strategy.

157. The delegation of Bangladesh informed the Commission about its fiscal and financial stimulus package, which consisted of subsidies to the agriculture and power sectors, increases in agricultural credit and social safety net programmes. Export incentives were to be increased and the maximum lending interest rate had been capped. In addition, policy changes to complement the stimulus package had been instituted. Those changes were an increase in the tax base, the expansion of the tax administration, the use of remittances for productive purposes, and social safety net programmes to increase aggregate demand.

158. The Commission was informed by the delegation of Japan that its Government: (a) was ready to provide up to $20 billion for budgetary support and infrastructure improvements for Asian countries; (b) would facilitate trade finance in developing countries—an additional $22 billion for two years; (c) would establish a new line of trade insurance amounting to $20 billion to assist infrastructure improvement in Asia; and (d) would invest approximately $5 billion in the area of environment.

159. The Commission noted one delegation's observation on the linkage between actions to be taken by developed and developing countries. The global economic crisis, which had negatively affected Asia-Pacific countries, particularly least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, could be managed only if developed and emerging economies both took action. At the global level, the reform of international financial institutions must be advanced, including speeding up International Monetary Fund quota reviews, in order to provide developing nations with a stronger voice.

160. The same delegation informed the Commission that it was important to leverage the United Nations development mandate to address the crisis. In that regard, it supported the Secretary-General's suggestion to establish a monitoring and alert mechanism to track developments, as there was still relatively little data on the political, social, economic and gender impacts of the crisis. The regional commissions, including ESCAP, could play a constructive role towards that end.

161. One delegation highlighted the critical role of ESCAP in providing a platform for mobilizing funds and providing a forum where Pacific concerns could be raised and brought to the international arena.

162. The Commission heard statements from several delegations on the effects of climate change. One delegation reported adverse temperature rise, uneven precipitation and the melting of mountain snowcaps. Some delegations briefed the Commission on a marked increase in storm surges and coastal erosion.

163. One delegation informed the Commission that, over the medium term, the main threat to its country came from temperature rise and the acidification of the surrounding ocean, which could lead to the extinction of coral reefs. In such a scenario, the two principal industries—tourism and fisheries—would likely fade along with the reefs that supported them. One delegation highlighted the impact of climate change on weather patterns, which had affected the replenishment of limited water aquifers, in turn affecting the yield of food crops and restricting the availability of safe drinking water.

164. Several delegations pointed out the impacts of climate change on water resources and related effects on the socio-economic development of least developed countries and, particularly, small island developing States. In that connection, some delegations pointed out the need to adopt new approaches to water infrastructure development, such as participatory management and eco-efficient development. One delegation pointed out the challenge of maintaining healthy and clean water and drew attention to the policy recommendations on water resources management of the Fifth World Water Forum, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 16 to 22 March 2009.[19]

Sub-item (b)
Regional cooperation for shared prosperity and social progress

165. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/16 on regional cooperation for shared prosperity and social progress.

166. The Commission noted that poverty was one of the main obstacles in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. One delegation informed the Commission of the various strategies, policies and programmes its country had adopted in achieving the Goals. Those polices and programmes had emphasized the expansion of the scope for pro-poor economic growth in order to increase employment opportunities and income for the poor and had included the provision of social protection for the poor through education, health, nutrition and other social interventions. Emphasis had also been placed on the empowerment of women to close the gender gap, participatory governance to enhance the voice of the

[19] See www.worldwaterforum5.org.

poor, and the promotion of the security, power and social inclusion of the poor.

167. The Commission noted that several least developed countries and landlocked developing countries had made good progress in reaching many targets related to the Millennium Development Goals, including halving the proportion of the population living below the national poverty line, reducing child and maternal mortality and achieving gender parity in primary and secondary education. One delegation informed the Commission that its country was still struggling with a high incidence of child malnutrition and maternal mortality.

168. The Commission noted that the food, fuel and economic crises posed significant threats to the prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Although the least developed countries of the Asia-Pacific region had done better than those of other regions, the food and fuel crises and the current global economic crisis had had a measurable downward impact on their growth performance in 2008 and would most likely have the same adverse effect in 2009 and in 2010. Global high prices of food had threatened vulnerable groups in many developing countries, and the growing tendency towards a global undernourished population led one delegation to express serious concerns about achieving the Goal-related target of halving the proportion of the population that was undernourished. It was therefore essential to ensure that the development gains made so far in achieving the Goals were not negated by the possible adverse impacts of the crises. Developed country partners were urged, despite their own budgetary pressure, to meet the official development assistance commitments that they made at the International Conference on Financing for Development. The international community needed to take proactive measures to assist the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries and other vulnerable countries, to overcome supply-side constraints so as to benefit from international trade opportunities. There was a need to effectively operationalize aid for trade and to address preference erosion issues.

169. The Commission was informed by several delegations about measures taken by their countries in support of the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. In 2008, the Government of India unilaterally announced a scheme to grant duty-free and preferential access to products from all least developed countries. The tariff lines covered under that scheme spanned 92.5 per cent of all global exports of all least developed countries, and 94 per cent of India's total tariff lines. Japan was implementing various technical assistance projects in several least developed countries and landlocked developing countries aimed at raising their capacity in rice production, food processing and aquaculture under a South-South cooperation initiative. China had waived import duties on exports from some 41 least developed countries and provided assistance in the development of infrastructure. Both China and India had also written off the debts of several countries under the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative.

170. The Commission was informed that there was significant potential for enlarging the intraregional flow of labour, goods and services for the benefit of the least developed countries and the landlocked developing countries. The foundations for increased regional cooperation were stronger in the region. In particular, South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation was playing a key role in using the expertise and resources of other developing countries for the benefit of the least developed countries in areas such as human resources development, the expansion of trade in energy and services, and tourism and overseas employment.

Sub-item (c)
Summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to countries with special needs

171. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/17 on the summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to countries with special needs.

172. The Commission noted, in the context of the implementation of its resolution 63/5 of 23 May 2007 on the midterm review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, that the Almaty Programme of Action had produced tangible results, especially in transport and trade. One delegation, in relation to the Almaty Programme of Action, informed the Commission about the proposal, as contained in a draft resolution sponsored by that delegation (E/ESCAP/65/L.6), to establish an international think tank of landlocked developing countries to enhance their analytical capability. The delegation further informed the Commission that the General Assembly, at its high-level meeting on the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action, held in New York on 2 and 3 October 2008, had welcomed the think tank proposal.[20] The delegation urged international organizations and the donor community to assist in realizing that initiative.

173. The Commission was informed of the work of the secretariat in implementing Commission resolution 63/6 of 23 May 2007 on the implementation of intercountry energy cooperation to enhance energy security for sustainable development with a view to widening access to energy services in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States and requested that work should continue under that resolution. The Commission noted the request from one delegation to provide more facilitation opportunities, through South-South or triangular cooperation, to assist Pacific island countries

[20] See General Assembly resolution 63/2, para. 26.

in selecting appropriate and cost-effective technologies to meet energy needs. One delegation recognized the important role that regional cooperation could play in improving energy access for the poor and requested that the secretariat strengthen its efforts in that regard.

174. The Commission was informed by one delegation that, in implementation of Commission resolution 63/7 of 23 May 2007 on international migration and development for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, a situation analysis of international migration in East and South-East Asia had been conducted by the secretariat and the International Organization for Migration. The delegation requested that the secretariat conduct a similar study for South and South-West Asia, which should also include the adverse effects of the global economic crisis. The same delegation highlighted the need for a forum for dialogue among member States on international migration, especially in relation to countries with special needs. Another delegation called for the development of an international migration database covering the Pacific subregion.

175. The same delegation also supported the proposed review of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[21] and requested that the issue be raised at the session of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries during the sixty-sixth session of the Commission.

176. The Commission recognized the importance of South-South cooperation and emphasized the need for strengthening that modality for countries with special needs. One delegation noted that it had provided various training opportunities for a number of Pacific island countries. Those training opportunities covered microfinance, art and culture, technical cooperation in farming and fishing techniques, agricultural equipment and machinery, diplomatic training and exchange visits for journalists and artists.

Sub-item (d)
Other matters

177. The Commission was briefed about the preparations for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries scheduled for early 2011. As part of that process, the regional commissions were expected to conduct their own review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

178. The Commission was briefed on the outcome of a meeting on capacity development organized by the United Nations Development Programme, the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) and ESCAP. The meeting was attended by several least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. The outcome of the meeting emphasized the need for more investment in capacities for national development. It highlighted the importance of improving the efficiency and accountability of such investments. It also recognized that people and organizations must be involved in identifying their own needs and achieving their own solutions.

179. The Commission adopted resolutions 65/1 on the implementation of the Bali Outcome Document in addressing the food, fuel and financial crises and 65/6 on support for the establishment of an international think tank of landlocked developing countries.

Agenda item 4
Management issues

Sub-item (a)
Draft programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011

180. The Commission had before it documents E/ESCAP/65/18 and Add.1 containing the draft programme of work of ESCAP for the biennium 2010-2011, which the Commission endorsed for submission to the intergovernmental review bodies concerned at the global level.

181. In introducing the draft programme of work, the Executive Secretary indicated that the document represented the culmination of efforts by the Commission to reposition and restructure ESCAP for greater relevance and effectiveness. The Executive Secretary further stated that the draft programme of work was aligned with the conference structure of the Commission, as adopted in Commission resolution 64/1, and designed to enable ESCAP to achieve the expected accomplishments, as set out in the strategic framework for the period 2010-2011, which had been adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/247 of 24 December 2008. The programme of work represented a shift from a thematic approach to a clearer issue-based focus, with outputs reflecting the priorities of the Commission, the value addition of regional and subregional work by ESCAP, and the comparative advantage areas of the Commission.

182. The Executive Secretary outlined the review process that had taken place prior to the submission of the draft programme of work to the Commission, including the reviews by the five Committees subsidiary to the Commission and the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission. The changes proposed by those bodies had been reflected in the document before the Commission.

[21] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

183. The Commission noted that the draft programme of work for 2010-2011 was well aligned with the strategic framework for 2010-2011[22] and responsive to the development needs and challenges facing the region, including areas for regional cooperation.

184. With regard to the implementation of the programme of work for 2010-2011, the Commission noted the need to ensure a balanced approach, with attention given to the needs of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

185. The Commission further noted the view of one delegation regarding the useful role that the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific could play, particularly through its research and analytical work, in addressing poverty reduction and food security in the region.

186. With regard to the outputs related to ad hoc intergovernmental meetings proposed under subprogramme 8, the Commission noted one delegation's request that they be convened as one-time meetings to deliberate on operational matters related to the work of the new subregional offices.

187. In response to a request by one delegation to integrate "poverty reduction" into the title of subprogramme 1, the secretariat informed the Commission that, as the General Assembly had already adopted the strategic framework for 2010-2011 containing the name of that subprogramme, it would not be possible to revise it at the current stage. However, every effort would be made by the secretariat to highlight the poverty reduction dimension in the relevant outputs under that subprogramme.

188. The Executive Secretary expressed her gratitude to the Commission for its guidance and support of the proposed programme of work for 2010-2011.

Sub-item (b)
Programme changes for the biennium 2008-2009

189. The Commission had before it documents E/ESCAP/65/19 and Add.1 containing the proposed programme changes for the biennium 2008-2009.

190. The Executive Secretary stated that the proposed programme changes for the biennium 2008-2009 reflected developments since the sixty-third session of the Commission. The developments included the decision of the Commission, in its resolution 64/1, to restructure its conference structure and sharpen the focus of work under the Committee on Transport and the newly created Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen the development pillar of the United Nations, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/260.

191. The Commission endorsed the proposed programme changes for the biennium 2008-2009, as contained in the above-mentioned documents.

Sub-item (c)
Strengthening the United Nations development pillar at the regional level: proposed ESCAP subregional offices

192. The Commission had before it the proposed road map for the establishment of new subregional offices in East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia (E/ESCAP/65/20), and a report by an independent consultant on the most feasible and strategic locations for the new ESCAP subregional offices (E/ESCAP/65/20/Add.1 and Corr.1).

193. In her introductory remarks on the issue, the Executive Secretary informed the Commission that the secretariat had begun the process for the establishment of the three new subregional offices in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/260 of 24 December 2008, in which, among other things, the Assembly had approved additional regular budget resources for the establishment and operation of the three new subregional offices and the strengthening of the existing subregional office for the Pacific. With regard to the process, the secretariat had adopted a phased approach in its review.

194. The Commission was informed that every effort had been made by the secretariat to ensure a transparent process of review. The secretariat had informed governments, through both written communication and through information provided to the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, that it had intended to conduct an impartial review of all options for the locations of the new subregional offices. It had also engaged an independent consultant to review the most strategic and feasible options for the locations, including offers from interested Governments.

195. The Commission noted that the report by the independent consultant had recommended that the secretariat explore and consider in greater depth the "preferred" option for each subregion. That would entail undertaking site visits to that option and, if necessary, to the alternative option for each subregion. The final decision in determining the most appropriate location would be conditional upon the conclusion of the relevant agreements with the prospective host Governments. The offices were expected to be established and operational by the end of 2009 so they would be ready to deliver the programme of work for the forthcoming 2010-2011 biennium.

[22] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/63/6/Rev.1), Programme 15.

196. The Commission welcomed the General Assembly's decision to strengthen the United Nations development pillar at the regional level through support for three new ESCAP subregional offices, and the strengthening of the ESCAP subregional office for the Pacific. Several delegations expressed the view that the decision would enhance the subregional presence of ESCAP and increase its effectiveness in delivering a more balanced programme of work in the different subregions.

197. The Commission expressed appreciation for the secretariat's efforts in preparing the proposal to the General Assembly to strengthen the United Nations development pillar at the regional level, and for making preparations for the establishment of the new subregional offices.

198. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the road map prepared by the secretariat as well as for the report of the independent consultant that had been prepared to support deliberations on what was a very difficult and complex issue.

199. The delegation of Mongolia expressed the view that the staffing of the subregional offices should follow an equitable geographical distribution. It expressed the intention of following the staffing process closely, especially regarding the subregional office for East and North-East Asia.

200. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expressed the view that the subregional office for East and North-East Asia should be established with the agreement of member States in that subregion, in a location convenient to all the countries of the subregion in terms of factors such as alignment with United Nations system structure, transport connections and proximity to other countries in the subregion.

201. The delegation of the Republic of Korea expressed disagreement with the recommendations of the report by the independent consultant as far as that document related to the East and North-East Asian subregion. In the view of that delegation, the unique experience of the Republic of Korea as a developing country that would also become a donor country and member of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 2010, on the basis of its commitment to increase overseas development assistance, positioned it well to bridge developed and developing countries. Incheon, Republic of Korea, offered a number of advantages from a practical point of view: the city was a regional air hub with attractive facilities and had offered a generous package, valued at over $2 million, to support the subregional office.

202. The delegation of China expressed its support for the establishment of the subregional office for East and North-East Asia wherever that office was located.

203. The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed appreciation that the consultant's report had appropriately included the country in both the subregion for North and Central Asia and the subregion for East and North-East Asia.

204. The delegation of Kazakhstan assured the secretariat of its support in the process of establishing the new ESCAP subregional offices.

205. The delegation of Kiribati, on behalf of Pacific delegations, welcomed the additional support that had been provided to the subregional office for the Pacific under the United Nations development pillar, and acknowledged the efforts of the Executive Secretary to improve the impact of the secretariat's work in that subregion. The Pacific delegations were of the view that the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre was strategically placed to interact and respond more effectively to the needs of the Pacific countries.

206. The delegation of Fiji requested additional information on the specific areas of work in which the subregional office for the Pacific would be strengthened.

207. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed the view that the distribution of the ESCAP regional institutions and subregional offices should be proportionate to strike a balance between subregions and to avoid unwanted radical centralization, and also stressed the need to expand the ESCAP domain of activities to uncovered areas of Asia and the Pacific, particularly south-west areas.

208. The delegation of Pakistan, while appreciating the independent consultant for preparing a report and giving his time and efforts, expressed its dissatisfaction with the report. That delegation was of the view that the report had procedural flaws, lacked information and was contradictory to the terms of reference laid down for the consultant for establishment of the subregional offices. That delegation further noted that the report, as submitted by the consultant, was only desk work and that no field visits had been conducted. That delegation noted that, in the South and South-West Asian subregion, willingness to host a subregional office had been shown by only two countries, but that the consultant had recommended a third country that had not shown its willingness, as the most feasible option. That delegation expressed the view that that was totally in contradiction to the terms of reference laid down for the consultant for recommending the location of the subregional offices. That delegation further expressed the opinion that Islamabad would provide a conducive atmosphere for a subregional office, among other reasons, also because of a substantial presence of diplomatic missions and multilateral development agencies and work that had already started on a new air hub in the city. In the view of that delegation, the consultant's report had treated issues such as the possibilities of air connections through Dubai inconsistently in its analysis of different countries.

209. The delegation of India informed the Commission that, if so decided, India would be ready to host the subregional office for South and South-West Asia. It referred to India's long and close association with ESCAP as one of the four developing country founding members, and its hosting of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology. That delegation viewed as questionable any role for the subregional office for South and South-West Asia in supporting the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, as might have been presumed by the consultant's report.

210. The delegations of Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Turkey expressed reservations about the procedure followed by the secretariat and the independent consultant in considering States that had not put forward offers to host subregional offices as part of the review of the most feasible and strategic locations for those offices.

211. The delegation of Sri Lanka expressed the view that the procedure lacked transparency, especially with regard to the office for South and South-West Asia, where the consultant had recommended a country that had not submitted an offer to the secretariat as the preferred option, even though Sri Lanka had submitted an offer and was considered by the consultant as a feasible location.

212. On that issue, the Commission was informed that, to ensure transparency, the secretariat had invited all member States to submit offers and commissioned an impartial review for discussion in the Commission. The overriding purpose was to select the most feasible and strategic locations for the offices, with offers from interested Governments being one significant consideration. In addition, since selection of a location was subject to a headquarters agreement being concluded with the host country, the secretariat deemed it desirable to consider a range of possible options.

213. The delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Korea expressed the view that the establishment of subregional offices was an important task for ESCAP that should be considered carefully on the basis of a thorough assessment from a long-term perspective. In that context, the delegation of the Republic of Korea expressed the view that the secretariat should reassess the merits and demerits of each candidate city through field trips and submit a revised road map and report for the consideration of member countries. The delegation of Pakistan expressed the view that, from a strategic point of view and a long-term perspective, Pakistan had always provided a conducive atmosphere and played a key part in United Nations activities around the world, upholding the principles of the United Nations.

214. The delegations of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea and Turkey expressed the view that the secretariat should undertake site visits to all countries that had submitted offers to host subregional offices before a decision was taken on the locations. On that issue, the Executive Secretary responded that the secretariat would strongly consider conducting site visits to all countries that had submitted proposals to host subregional offices, as well as those recommended by the independent consultant, before taking a decision.

215. The delegations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation expressed the view that the locations of the subregional offices should be based on consensus among the countries in the various subregions, as expressed in a resolution or decision of the Commission.

216. The delegations of Pakistan and Turkey expressed the view that a decision on the locations of the new subregional offices should be deferred to allow the field visits to take place and a decision could be reached at the sixty-sixth session of the Commission.

217. In response to a question from some delegations on the procedure and next steps, the secretariat clarified that the General Assembly had mandated ESCAP to establish the subregional offices, which should be operational by the end of 2009 to deliver their programme of work for the 2010-2011 biennium. In the absence of a consensus in the Commission on issues such as the proposed locations, and on the basis of the procedure followed for the establishment of the subregional office in the Pacific, the secretariat would proceed with the establishment of the offices, taking into account the comments made by delegations at the current Commission session.

218. The Commission encouraged the secretariat to continue its efforts in establishing those offices in a timely manner, in consultation with member States in the different subregions. The delegation of Pakistan expressed the view that those offices should be established in accordance with the terms of reference laid down for the consultant for recommending the location of the subregional offices.

219. The Commission and the Executive Secretary expressed their strong appreciation to Governments that had submitted offers to host the new ESCAP subregional offices. Discussions in the Commission on the issue had demonstrated the high priority and importance that delegations attached to those offices.

Sub-item (d)
Technical cooperation activities of ESCAP and announcement of intended contributions

220. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/21, which provided an overview of the secretariat's technical cooperation activities and extrabudgetary contributions in 2008.

221. In her introductory remarks, the Executive Secretary informed the Commission of the secretariat's initiative to shift from a project-based approach to a more integrated programme approach, which aimed at creating greater impact and supporting Governments in the delivery of key development results, particularly in meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

222. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that a key element of the secretariat's technical cooperation work in 2008 had focused on partnership-building to promote "Delivering as one" at the regional level, particularly through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism, which had a membership of about 30 regional and subregional United Nations and affiliated organizations and was chaired by ESCAP.

223. The Executive Secretary highlighted a number of key achievements for 2008, including support for post-Cyclone Nargis recovery and livelihood creation as well as work in the areas of addressing the complex and interrelated challenges regarding the food, fuel and financial crises and climate change; the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway network; strengthening capacities of national statistical systems; social protection; capacity-building through the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade; and administration of the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia.[23]

224. The Commission noted that the total contributions received by the secretariat for technical cooperation activities in 2008 from the regular budget as well as voluntary sources amounted to approximately $12.2 million. In addition, generous in kind contributions, including the services of non-reimbursable loan experts, had been provided by various donors.

225. Several delegations expressed their appreciation and support for the technical cooperation work of the secretariat, including the activities of the five ESCAP regional institutions.

226. The Commission noted the request by one delegation that ESCAP should focus on areas in which it had a comparative advantage, including the promotion of connectivity and regional integration, particularly through the enhancement of technical cooperation in areas related to the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway network. It further noted the view of another delegation regarding the need to increase the role of ESCAP in promoting technical cooperation and the sharing of good practices among countries, particularly in response to the financial and economic crisis. One delegation, in noting the useful efforts of the Executive Secretary to further enhance the effectiveness and activities of the regional institutions, pointed out the need for the regional institutions to implement their work at a wider level in the region.

227. The Commission noted the following contributions pledged by members and associate members of ESCAP for 2009.

[23] See Commission resolution 62/7 of 12 April 2006.

228. *Brunei Darussalam.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Brunei Darussalam would make the following contributions:

	$
SIAP	15 000
Pacific Trust Fund	1 000

229. *China.* The delegation of China indicated that its Government would make the following contributions:

China-ESCAP Cooperation Programme	RMB 1 000 000 and $150 000

	$
APCTT	20 000
SIAP	40 000
UNAPCAEM	20 000

230. *India.* The delegation of India announced that its Government would make the following contributions for the period from April 2009 to March 2010:

	$
APCICT	10 000
APCTT	200 000 (equivalent in rupees)
SIAP	20 000
UNAPCAEM	15 000

231. *Indonesia.* The delegation of Indonesia announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

CAPSA	Rp. 767 000 000

	$
APCTT	35 000
SIAP	15 000
UNAPCAEM	29 982

232. In addition, the delegation of Indonesia intended to make an in kind contribution in the amount of Rp. 850,000,000 to APCICT for the period from April to December 2009.

233. *Iran (Islamic Republic of).* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran had increased its contributions to ESCAP from $55,000 to $60,000 and would make the following contributions:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	16 000
APCTT	10 000
CAPSA	10 000
SIAP	12 000
UNAPCAEM	12 000

234. The notification of the Islamic Republic of Iran also referred to an offer of financial and in kind support for the establishment of an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communications and space technology-enabled disaster management in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

235. *Japan.* The delegation of Japan indicated that its Government would make the following contributions:

	$
ESCAP programme of work (Japan-ESCAP Cooperation Fund)	142 500
SIAP (for the period from April 2009 to March 2010)	1 665 680

236. The delegation of Japan also reported that its Government intended to make an in kind contribution equivalent to $1,152,640 to SIAP for the period from April 2009 to March 2010. In addition, as part of its technical cooperation programme through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, in cooperation with SIAP, the Government of Japan intended to provide fellowships for 58 individuals.

237. *Macao, China.* The secretariat had received written notification that the government of Macao, China, would make the following contributions:

	$
APCICT	5 000
APCTT	5 000
CAPSA	3 000
SIAP	18 000

238. *Malaysia.* The delegation of Malaysia announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

	$
APCTT	15 000
CAPSA	10 000
SIAP	20 000

239. *Mongolia.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Mongolia would make the following contribution:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	5 000

240. *Myanmar.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Myanmar would make the following contributions:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	2 000
CAPSA	1 000
SIAP	1 000

241. *Pakistan.* The delegation of Pakistan renewed its commitment to support the work of the regional institutions and indicated that its Government would make a contribution totalling $26,660 to the regional institutions for 2009 and would provide the breakdown separately.

242. *Republic of Korea.* The delegation of the Republic of Korea reaffirmed its Government's strong support for ESCAP technical cooperation activities through the Republic of Korea-ESCAP Cooperation Fund. The delegation reiterated that its Government would continue to support the operational costs for APCICT with a contribution of $2 million for 2009, of which $1.5 million would be in cash and $500,000 in kind. In addition, subject to funding availability, the Government would continue to make contributions to the other ESCAP regional institutions, namely APCTT, CAPSA, SIAP and UNAPCAEM, and other programmes such as the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP) and the North-East Asia Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC).

243. The Commission was informed by the delegation of the Republic of Korea that the Korea International Cooperation Agency had approved two ESCAP projects in 2008 to be implemented during the period 2008-2010 with a total budget of $1.5 million, and that the Korea Energy Management Corporation had recently approved the sum of 500 million Korean won for an ESCAP project to be implemented in 2009-2010.

244. *Russian Federation.* The delegation of the Russian Federation informed the Commission that its Government had taken the decision to make a voluntary annual contribution of $1.2 million to ESCAP in 2009 and 2010.

245. *Thailand.* The delegation of Thailand announced that its Government would make contributions as follows:

	$
APCTT	15 000
CAPSA	10 000
SIAP	20 000
UNAPCAEM	15 000
CCOP	40 000
Typhoon Committee	12 000
Tropical Cyclone Trust Fund	2 000
Pacific Trust Fund	1 000
Trust fund for the participation of the disadvantaged economies in transition and Mongolia	2 000

246. In concluding, the Executive Secretary thanked the Commission for its support of the secretariat's technical cooperation programme and thanked the

members and associate members which had pledged financial support for 2009. The Executive Secretary indicated that the outcomes of the technical cooperation work of ESCAP had provided valuable inputs into the Commission's normative and analytical work and were aimed at supporting the efforts of Governments to strengthen national capacities in a range of key development sectors.

Agenda item 5
Work of the ESCAP regional institutions

247. The Commission had before it documents E/ESCAP/65/22, E/ESCAP/65/23, E/ESCAP/65/24, E/ESCAP/65/25 and E/ESCAP/65/26, containing the reports of the ESCAP regional institutions, namely the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT), the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), the United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM), the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific (CAPSA), and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP).

248. The Commission was informed of the secretariat's full commitment to supporting the work of the five regional institutions and noted their strong potential to become leading centres of excellence in their respective fields, particularly in capacity-building, technology transfer and knowledge sharing. APCICT and SIAP had been fulfilling key capacity-building needs and served as vital training arms of the Commission. CAPSA, APCTT and UNAPCAEM had been developed further into regional knowledge centres with a focus on South-South cooperation.

249. The Commission noted the generous contributions of the Governments of China, India, Indonesia, Japan and the Republic of Korea as hosts of the five regional institutions. The secretariat drew attention to the need to diversify funding sources and ensure the financial sustainability of the regional institutions as well as their staffing base, and requested member States to consider increasing their contributions to the regional institutions.

250. The heads of each of the regional institutions provided an overview of the achievements of their respective institutions in 2008 and highlighted the outcomes of the recently concluded sessions of their Governing Councils. APCICT had intensified its efforts in ICT capacity for socio-economic development, particularly through the implementation of a flagship programme entitled "Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders Programme". APCTT had facilitated technology exchanges in the region utilizing modern ICT technologies through its web-based technology market and the development of an institutional cooperation mechanism on renewable energy technologies. CAPSA had developed plans to enhance its role in work related to food security and poverty alleviation, based on the recommendations of its Governing Council. SIAP had assisted 57 countries in strengthening their statistical capacity, particularly in fundamental aspects of official statistics. UNAPCAEM had strengthened its work in research and policy analysis, knowledge sharing and partnership building, particularly in promoting green technology for sustainable agricultural development.

251. Several delegations commended the work of the five regional institutions in their respective areas of specialization and reiterated their commitment to providing continued support for the regional institutions. One delegation expressed the view that some of the regional institutions needed to expand their funding base and further strengthen their work to meet the emerging needs of the ESCAP membership.

252. Some delegations acknowledged the significant achievements made by APCICT in ICT capacity-building through the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders. The representative of the Republic of Korea indicated that his Government intended to expand support to APCICT so as to enable the Centre to fulfil its mission and meet the diverse needs of member States. The representative of Indonesia reported on the national implementation of the APCICT Academy in Indonesia in collaboration with the University of Indonesia and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. Indonesia had provided an in kind contribution to the national roll-out of the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in Bahasa Indonesia for local government training.

253. The representative of India commended APCTT for its role as a promoter of regional and interregional cooperation in technology transfer and the management of innovation with special emphasis on South-South cooperation. That delegation noted with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the APCTT National Innovation System Phase 1 Project, which had been funded by the Government of India, and looked forward to the implementation of Phase 2 of the National Innovation System Project, which was under finalization.

254. The representative of China expressed appreciation for the work of UNAPCAEM and indicated that the agreement regarding administrative and financial arrangements for UNAPCAEM, as renewed in 2008, had contributed to the sustainability of the Centre. He indicated that China would provide further support to UNAPCAEM and other ESCAP regional institutions, particularly in the context of enhancing South-South cooperation.

255. The representative of Japan expressed appreciation for the contribution of ESCAP members and associate members to SIAP. The representative informed the Commission that the number of fellowships for the Tokyo Metropolitan Area-based (TMA) courses would decrease in 2009 due to the lower demand indicated in a survey. Japan would, however,

consider renewing those courses on the basis of the outcome of a review to be conducted in 2009. The delegation requested Governments to consult with their national statistical offices and related agencies so that demand for TMA statistical training programmes would be fully reflected in that review.

256. The representative of Indonesia commended CAPSA for the progress it had made and stressed that his Government would continue to support CAPSA capacity-building efforts in the areas of food security and sustainable agriculture.

257. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the statute of APCICT,[24] the Commission elected, along with the host country, Republic of Korea, the following countries to the Governing Council of the Centre for the period 2009-2012: Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

258. In accordance with paragraph 9 of the statute of CAPSA,[25] the Commission held elections for the Governing Council of the Centre for the period 2009-2012. In that regard, the Commission decided in resolution 65/4 to amend the statute in order to allow for a larger Council. In addition to the host country, Indonesia, the following countries were elected to the Governing Council for the period 2009-2012: Bangladesh, Cambodia, France, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Malaysia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and Thailand.

259. In accordance with paragraph 9 of the statute of UNAPCAEM,[26] the Commission elected, along with the host country, China, the following countries to the Governing Council of the Centre for the period 2009-2012: Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam.

260. The secretariat expressed appreciation to the Commission for its continuing support to the regional institutions, including the generous financial contributions.

Agenda item 6
Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

261. The Commission had before it the report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) (E/ESCAP/65/27). In his capacity as Rapporteur of the Advisory Committee, the Permanent Representative of Fiji to ESCAP presented highlights of the Committee's activities during the past year.

262. Since the sixty-fourth session of the Commission, ACPR had held six regular sessions, one special session and four meetings of the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions.

263. A key focus of the work of the Advisory Committee during the period under review had been the provision of guidance on the implementation of Commission resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission, including the preparations for the inaugural sessions and the setting of the agendas of the new subsidiary Committees.

264. The Advisory Committee had also reviewed the draft programme of work of ESCAP for the biennium 2010-2011 (E/ESCAP/65/18) and provided suggestions for changes that had been presented to the Commission. The Rapporteur also reported on the work undertaken by ACPR in the substantive preparations for the sixty-fifth and sixty-sixth sessions of the Commission.

265. The importance of ACPR as a consultative body and a channel for members of ESCAP to effectively participate in, and be informed of, the implementation by the secretariat of the decisions of the Commission was recognized. Some delegations expressed their desire to further strengthen cooperation among ACPR members and between ACPR and the secretariat.

266. The Commission noted the remark by one delegation that ACPR had increased its efficiency during the past year. The Commission further noted that ACPR had continued to effectively fulfil its role of providing advice to the Executive Secretary and maintaining close cooperation and dialogue between the members and the secretariat.

Agenda item 7
Dates, venue and theme topic for the sixty-sixth session of the Commission

267. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/65/28.

268. The Commission welcomed the generous offer by the Government of the Republic of Korea to host the sixty-sixth session of the Commission at Incheon in April/May 2010.

269. Concerning the options for the theme topic for the sixty-sixth session presented in document E/ESCAP/65/28, several delegations indicated that they preferred the option of "Towards a stable and supportive financial system for achieving the Millennium Development Goals", while several other delegations expressed a preference for the option on "Low carbon Green Growth: technology and financing".

270. The Commission adopted decision 65/1 on the dates, venue and theme topic for the sixty-sixth session.

[24] Commission resolution 61/6, annex.
[25] Commission resolution 60/5, annex.
[26] Commission resolution 61/3, annex.

Agenda item 8
Theme topic for the sixty-fifth session: "Towards sustainable agriculture and food security in the Asia-Pacific region"

271. The ministerial round table began with a presentation by the Executive Secretary on the theme study entitled *Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in Asia and the Pacific*.[27] The presentation of the Executive Secretary was followed by interventions by a number of panellists, including:

- H.E. Mr. Anton Apriyantono, Minister for Agriculture, Indonesia
- H.E. Maj. General Htay Oo, Minister for Agriculture, Myanmar
- H.E. Mr. Liu Jieyi, Assistant Minister for Foreign Affairs, China
- H.E. Mr. Mashiur Rahman, Adviser to the Prime Minister, Bangladesh
- Ms. Ursula Schaefer-Preuss, Vice-President, Asian Development Bank
- Dr. David Nabarro, Coordinator, United Nations Task Force on Food Security

272. In her presentation, the Executive Secretary highlighted that the region was home to a large number of food insecure people in spite of an enormous capacity for food production. The root causes of food insecurity identified in the theme study were: poverty; low farm revenues that discouraged small- and medium-scale farmers from investing in agriculture; environmental degradation and competition for natural resources, particularly land and water; protectionist trade policies; volatile fuel prices and speculation; and declines in investment in agricultural research and development.

273. The theme study indicated that food insecurity was likely to increase if current long-term trends towards increased population and prosperity continued. The study identified four priority actions at the regional level to ensure food security: developing a foundation for social protection to address food security issues; promoting sustainable agriculture; promoting food self-sufficiency and food self-reliance; and developing and monitoring indicators on food security and socio-economic development.

274. In the interventions by the panellists and the discussions that followed, the key challenges identified to food security in the region were: reduced access to food due to the high levels of poverty and low purchasing power of the poor; threats to health, such as poor sanitation and the lack of access to safe drinking water; the lack of social protection against shocks; and subsidies given to farmers in developed countries, combined with other trade-distorting policies, which caused non-optimal production and pricing of agricultural products. It was felt that food security could not be achieved without addressing poverty and improving the provision of health care and social protection.

275. It was noted that the challenge of food security presented a variety of diverse issues, which required action to tackle agricultural development, climate change, food security and nutrition in a cross-sectoral manner, bringing the actions of different government institutions into an integrated approach.

276. It was also recognized that, over the medium term, the promotion of sustainable agriculture should be accorded priority. Governments needed to invest in agricultural research that increased food production while protecting the environment. Promoting rain-fed agriculture and sustainable irrigation systems would encourage better use of water resources. However, the success of those measures was contingent upon building capacities at the local level, particularly those of small-scale farmers.

277. It was stressed that it was vital to strengthen knowledge and research in agriculture, expand agricultural extension services, provide adequate infrastructure in agriculture and ensure that farmers had access to credit. Furthermore, it was recognized that investment in agriculture had declined in recent years. In that context, agriculture was in need of sustained investment, proper policy formulation and good institutions that would take into account the interests of smallholders.

278. It was noted that climate change was beginning to make an impact on agriculture in the region. Extreme meteorological disasters triggered by climate change had led to a decline in food production and therefore posed risks to regional food security. Drought was adversely affecting the ecosystems in many countries in the region, while land degradation posed a critical challenge to sustainable agriculture. Furthermore, there was a need to raise the profile of soil conservation and land degradation policies.

279. The biggest challenge in the long term would be dealing with the impact of climate change. It was important to develop strategies for strengthening the scientific assessment, forecasting, information-sharing and risk management capabilities of countries in the region and for building the resilience of communities to cope with the effects of climate change.

280. It was also important for agriculture to be seen as an engine of economic and social growth, particularly in rural areas. Investing in agriculture and protecting the interests of smallholders were absolutely critical and required a focus on stimulating the productivity of smallholders in the face of price volatility. Unless Governments protected smallholders from high input prices and/or low sales prices, it would be difficult for them to prosper. It was of critical importance to stimulate a second green revolution. The importance of linking production, processing and marketing by

[27] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.II.F.12.

involving various organizations, including the private sector, in order to increase the revenues derived from value chains was recognized.

281. The Commission was informed that trade policies played an important role in shaping food security in the Asia-Pacific region. On the one hand, subsidies to farmers in developed countries, combined with the other trade-distorting policies of those countries, caused non-optimal production of agricultural products (thus also adversely affecting the environment). On the other hand, trade policies used by developing countries to establish or maintain food production could also have contributed to high local prices, adversely affecting some parts of their own populations. Any solution to food security at the regional level must include a correction of the trading system that would take into account the proper treatment of agriculture in developing and least developed countries.

282. Views were expressed regarding the essential role played by regional cooperation in tackling food insecurity, including in the areas of: (a) food price stability; (b) water security and management; (c) pest control in agriculture; and (d) climate change issues.

283. It was emphasized that, although food and fuel prices might have gone down for the time being, it was necessary to prepare for the time when the economies of the region would start to recover and the prices of food and fuel could be expected to rise. There would be a need to ensure that biofuel production did not impact food production. It was recognized that food security and agriculture had to be at the top of the political agenda.

284. The Executive Secretary, in her concluding remarks, reiterated that the challenge of food security required actions in the short term to increase access to food; actions in the medium term to strengthen and develop sustainable agriculture; and a long-term strategy for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change on agricultural production.

Agenda item 9
Addressing threats to development: key challenges to inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in the Asia-Pacific region

Policy statement by the Executive Secretary

285. The Executive Secretary observed that the ESCAP region faced some of the greatest threats to development seen in our time: climate change, extreme food and fuel price volatility in 2008, the worst financial and economic crises since the Great Depression—all of which could roll back development gains and precipitate a human tragedy in many parts of the ESCAP region. The time was ripe to use the collective strengths of the Asia-Pacific region to prevent that emergency from arising.

286. The Executive Secretary took stock of the challenges facing the region and addressed the policy responses which could make a difference. She stated that what had started as a financial crisis in the West had become an economic crisis in the East. The Asia-Pacific region had initially shown remarkable resilience to the crisis due to post-1997 financial reforms. However, that resilience was under severe pressure, with declines in investment and consumption in the global market and predictions that global trade would shrink by 9 per cent in 2009. In the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2009*[28] it was estimated that growth of developing members would fall from 5.8 per cent in 2008 to 3 per cent in 2009. The developed economies were projected to contract by 3 per cent during the same period. As many as 23 million people, particularly women employed in the manufacturing sector, could lose their jobs, with rising income insecurity affecting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific.

287. As for issues of food and fuel security, the Executive Secretary noted that, despite its enormous capacity to produce food, the region was home to the largest number of food-insecure people in the world. In the 2009 theme study, entitled *Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in Asia and the Pacific*, the secretariat had identified 25 countries that were considered food insecurity hot spots and pointed out that the region accounted for more than 64 per cent of the world's undernourished adults and children. Those numbers underlined the fact that the region was one of great disparities.

288. The Executive Secretary highlighted the fact that, while poverty was the primary cause of food insecurity in the region, protectionist trade policies could drive up food prices, making it difficult for the poor to access food. Declines in farm revenue and increased costs of production forced small-scale farmers out of business. Increasingly the young in rural areas migrated, leaving the old behind as agriculture ceased to be a viable option. Furthermore, least developed countries and many landlocked developing countries, together with small island developing States, were almost totally dependent on imported oil and gas. That dependency complicated their ability to recover from the current economic crisis.

289. The Executive Secretary underlined the fact that, in Asia and the Pacific, climate change was no longer a distant threat; it was a reality. For many of the Pacific and small island States, it was a question of survival or extinction. The Asia-Pacific region was responsible for 34 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions; it was also home to 7 of the 15 major global greenhouse gas-emitting countries and it accounted for 80 per cent of the disaster-related casualties that had occurred globally in the last decade.

[28] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.II.F.11.

290. The convergence and scale of the challenges described by the Executive Secretary reflected the profound need to respond with systemic changes and deeper reforms. The Bali Outcome Document and the subsequent analysis of the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2009* advocated that economic recovery should be based upon a more inclusive and sustainable development paradigm, for which fiscal stimulus packages and policy reforms provided an excellent opportunity. The commitment by the G-20 of $300 billion in aid provided support funds. Partnerships, including with Governments, business and civil society, would also provide additional resources and know-how.

291. The Executive Secretary outlined three policy responses that she believed would guide the way forward:

(a) *Increasing economic growth through regional trade and integration:* The Asia-Pacific region was more economically integrated with the rest of the world than with itself, with intraregional trade among developing countries accounting for only 37 per cent of exports in the ESCAP region, in comparison with the North American Free Trade Agreement area at 51 per cent and the European Union at 68 per cent. There were enormous opportunities for growth in South-South trade and investment but existing trade barriers, both tariff and non-tariff, needed to be removed. Accelerated implementation of the numerous regional economic partnership agreements would also promote further trade and investment. An early conclusion of the Doha Round, in accordance with its development mandate, would also be essential. Trade would also be improved through increased investments in sustainable transportation and ICT connectivity. Closing the ICT divide and strengthening the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks were vital components of regional trade and integration;

(b) *Strengthening the foundation for social protection:* Building the foundations for better social security in the region would also mitigate the impact of current and future crises. In a region where lifespans were increasing and 30 per cent of the elderly received support, pensions would play an important role. Furthermore, only 20 per cent of the population had access to health care. Access to health-care insurance was therefore critical. Social protection systems not only created the foundations for more inclusive and harmonious societies, they also made good economic sense. By increasing income security, the spending power of middle- and lower-income people would be freed up, thus increasing domestic demand and macroeconomic stability;

(c) *Promoting sustainability:* Action on climate change was currently needed with a new sense of urgency and a responsibility not only to protect today's economy but also to prepare for the economy of the future. The discussion of the economic impact or cost of climate change had mainly been of the potential threat. Yet there was a need to examine the challenge as an opportunity for new growth, for innovation and for a modern economy based upon Green Growth, energy efficiency and the increased use of renewable energy. To achieve that, partnerships between the public and private sectors as well as civil society were needed to bring about a paradigm shift, not only in policies but also in behaviour.

292. In concluding, the Executive Secretary stated that ESCAP was a strategic regional player that could effectively support the member States in shaping a more balanced and inclusive approach to sustainable development. As the regional secretariat, and as chair of the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism, the secretariat stood ready to facilitate the coordination of the development policy responses outlined. Their successful implementation would pave the way for a more economically, socially and ecologically balanced and inclusive Asia-Pacific region where people could live free from want, from fear and from discrimination.

Sub-item (a)
Addressing the financial crisis and its convergence with other threats to development: towards a stable and supportive financial system for development

293. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Addressing the financial crisis and its convergence with other threats to development: towards a stable and supportive financial system for development" (E/ESCAP/65/30). The Commission also had before it an addendum entitled "Analysis of regional impact and policy responses to the crisis: update" (E/ESCAP/30/Add.1). Given the rapidly evolving nature of the financial crisis, the addendum provided updated information on the regional impact of the wider economic crisis that had mushroomed from the financial crisis, and on policy responses and secretariat initiatives.

294. The Commission noted that the financial crisis which originated in developed countries had evolved into an economic crisis which had severely impacted developing countries in the region. The Commission expressed appreciation for the timely and pertinent findings and recommendations of the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2009*. It noted further that the economic crisis had negatively affected the growth performance of economies in the region, particularly through a decline in exports destined for developed countries and a reduction in international capital flows for investment. Rising unemployment with multidimensional ramifications for social stability were also of major concern.

295. The Commission noted that countries had responded through a host of expansionary monetary and fiscal stimulus policies. Policy reforms enacted as a consequence of the 1997 Asian crisis had also helped insulate the financial sectors in the region from the worst of the fallout of the crisis.

296. The Commission was informed that countries in the region should strengthen the coordination of their monetary, financial and fiscal policy responses to ensure recovery from the economic crisis through, among other things, strengthened regional cooperation and more effective use of the platform offered by ESCAP. One delegation called on the secretariat to devise a strategy to address the economic crisis. Furthermore, the Commission expressed support for the United Nations monitoring and alert mechanism, and the role of the regional commissions, including ESCAP, in tracking developments and enhancing understanding of the impact of the crisis.

297. The Commission underlined the need for greater coordination on global financial reform, and further noted that the G20 mechanism was an important forum for coordination and collaborative actions to address the global economic crisis. Several delegations underlined the need for strengthened regulatory measures, enhanced transparency mechanisms for capital markets, a stronger voice for developing countries, and the promotion of a future growth paradigm that was both inclusive and sustainable. The importance of maintaining the aid commitments of developed countries to developing countries, particularly least developed countries, Pacific island economies and landlocked developing countries, especially in the light of reduced private capital flows and remittances, falling exports, and rising unemployment due to the financial crisis, was also underlined.

298. The Commission was of the view that, in order to effectively tackle the current financial and economic crisis, trade as an engine of growth should be supported and, to that end, protectionist pressures should be resisted. Open and free trading systems, trade facilitation measures and regional trade and investment linkages should be promoted. In that context, one delegation called for regional integration initiatives, such as the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, to be deepened and widened, while another delegation welcomed the progress in the implementation of free trade agreements between ASEAN and various other countries and the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community.

299. Some delegations noted that the benefits of trade and investment were distributed unevenly and that, in order to correct the imbalances, low-income countries, particularly least developed countries, needed enhanced market access for their exports and a simplification of rules of origin, assistance for capacity-building in trade and investment, and more foreign direct investment, including in the agricultural sector.

300. The Commission was informed of the importance of concluding the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations in accordance with its development mandate. Some delegations noted that agricultural subsidies distorted agricultural trade, depressed international food prices and hence were a disincentive for farmers to invest in agriculture and produce sufficient food. The outcome of agricultural negotiations in the Doha Round should address the distortions in global agricultural trade.

301. The Commission expressed appreciation for the increased funding resources that were being provided by various members and associate members of ESCAP, including those being provided for developing countries to support, inter alia, fiscal stimulus packages, attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, enhanced bank lending, and expanded trade financing. One delegation suggested that consideration should be given to the establishment of a regional trade facility to address concerns that a recession in developed countries would significantly reduce the availability of trade credit and, hence, restrict trade.

302. The Commission was informed of various initiatives that countries had implemented to develop their private sector, facilitate trade, improve their investment climate and support their small and medium-sized enterprises, which had been particularly hard hit by the crisis. Two delegations called for more foreign direct investment in the rural sector and an enabling investment climate for that purpose.

303. The Commission noted with concern how food price spikes in 2008 had exposed, in particular, the poor and vulnerable to income, food and nutrition insecurity. Although those prices had recently declined, several delegations expressed concern about the prospects for another round of soaring food and energy prices once the world economy recovered from the current recession. In that context, the Commission noted the need to develop a coordinated long-term strategy to ensure global food and nutrition security.

304. Several delegations expressed the need to adopt a holistic approach to address the long-term issue of food security and sustainable agriculture, highlighting its complex connections with energy security and climate change. The possibility that fuel prices might once again soar as economic growth resumed—and, hence, demand for energy recovered—highlighted the need to accelerate the shift from traditional fossil fuels to alternative energy sources, particularly renewable energy, and to a more sustainable pattern of energy consumption. Furthermore, the influence of climate change on weather-related natural disasters posed serious threats to agricultural productivity, underscoring the need for a "second green revolution" that would address food security in a sustainable manner.

305. The Commission underlined the importance of focusing on the rural poor as a key aspect of a long-term strategy to reduce food insecurity by enhancing their access to economic opportunities and growth. A focused effort to reduce rural poverty by, inter alia, supporting small-scale farmers, building rural infrastructure,

enhancing access to basic social services, and promoting cooperatives of producers to enable them to market their products could be instrumental in both directly reducing rural food insecurity and making more food available for both rural and urban families.

306. Some delegations noted the potential impacts of climate change on socio-economic development and the need for a holistic and long-term cooperative approach in dealing with climate change challenges. One delegation noted that green growth initiatives that could mitigate the impact of the current crisis by creating new jobs, and dissemination of low carbon, resource-efficient technologies for enhanced eco-efficiency and industrial competitiveness in the region.

307. One delegation suggested that the region should step up efforts to address climate change under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[29] and its Kyoto Protocol,[30] abiding by the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities".[31] Another delegation proposed that regional cooperation in environmental management be strengthened by setting up a climate fund for adaptation and mitigation measures to be taken by the countries affected adversely by climate change.

308. One delegation expressed concern about the current state of the global and regional energy markets and emphasized the need for a new legal arrangement to regulate all aspects of the global energy market (production, transmission and utilization) in a transparent manner. The same delegation underlined the role that ESCAP could play in fostering Euro-Asian partnerships to tackle food, economic and energy security, while another delegation noted the potential in facilitating Euro-Asian partnerships in the area of efficient use of natural resources and environmental protection. In that regard, the Commission noted with appreciation that the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development would be hosted in Kazakhstan in 2010 and would be followed up by the Environment for Europe Conference in 2011.

309. The Commission noted that the 5th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting would be held in Japan on 22 and 23 May, and would focus on the environment with the launching of a Pacific environment community to deal with environmental and climate change issues.

310. One delegation pointed out the need to continue to increase investment in the Greater Mekong Subregion and called for stronger cooperation between ESCAP and the Mekong River Commission in collaboration with other key stakeholders on water resources development.

311. The Commission noted that the lack of transport as well as information and communications infrastructure had long hampered exchanges between peoples. As a result, large numbers of people were excluded from the benefits of development and globalization. It was further noted that, with the entering into force of the Asian Highway[32] and the Trans-Asian Railway Network agreements, more and more parts of Asia were now connected, with development in landlocked and transit countries being promoted and the goals contained in the Almaty Programme of Action being achieved. One delegation proposed that, within the SPECA Programme, the secretariats of ESCAP and ECE consider promoting substantial transport infrastructure projects, including those along interregional corridors. A number of delegations expressed their support for ESCAP transport projects and noted the possibility of extending activities to include rural connectivity.

312. Several delegations noted that the Asia-Pacific region remained the world's most vulnerable to large-scale disasters and highlighted the importance of regional cooperation for effective reduction and management of natural disasters. One delegation expressed its support for the ESCAP initiative of disaster risk reduction, and informed the Commission that the Republic of Korea would host the fourth Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2010. Several delegations highlighted the impact of climate change in the form of sea level rising and its adverse impact on small island developing States. One delegation stressed the importance of simplifying the procedures for accessing climate change funds and improving delivery modalities, including exploring direct access possibilities.

313. The Commission noted the productive collaboration between the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and the secretariat in the utilization of space technology for disaster risk reduction, through the Sentinel Asia project and the project of Wideband InterNetworking engineering test and Demonstration Satellite (WINDS). Several delegations expressed appreciation for the work of regional institutions, including APCTT, CAPSA, UNAPCAEM and APCICT, in addressing challenges emerging from the triple threat to development.

314. One delegation referred to the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, administered by ESCAP, as a good example of regional cooperation and the Commission took note of further ASEAN efforts under way to develop a cooperative framework for disaster management with a focus on capacity-building at the community level.

[29] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.
[30] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.
[31] Ibid., Article 10.

[32] Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network, United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2323, No. 41607.

315. Several delegations stressed the importance of inclusive and sustainable growth and development. The need for empowerment of people to be at the centre of development, for investments to be made in education and health care, and for social security systems to be strengthened was stressed as a way of increasing people's income security and consumption capacities. The Commission noted the various government measures undertaken to enhance social security coverage, including social allowances, such as increased pensions for enterprise retirees, and increased and extended payment periods for unemployment allowances, the setting up of a nationwide basic medical and health-care system, the pursuit of a more active employment policy, and programmes on skills training and retraining. It also noted that some Governments had fiscal outlays allocated prior to the onset of the crisis which facilitated the setting up of responsive social protection programmes to mitigate the impact of the crisis. The Commission further noted that other Governments intended to undertake employment and social safety net programmes as well as to formulate a comprehensive social safety net to mitigate the impacts of the crisis on the poor and those who had been laid off.

Summary of messages from the High-level Panel on the Economic Crisis

316. The High-level Panel on the Economic Crisis, which was held during the sixty-fifth session of the Commission, provided a comparative perspective of the impacts of the economic crisis in various regions, discussed policy responses and assessed future directions for policy action. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, provided introductory remarks, highlighting the salient features of the impact of and responses to the economic crisis in the Asia-Pacific region, and served as moderator of the panel. The panellists were:

H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-hoon, Minister for Trade of the Republic of Korea and Chairperson of the sixty-fourth session of the Commission

Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Mr. Jan Kubis, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

Mr. Ajay Chhibber, Assistant Administrator and Director, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP (recorded video message)

Mr. Martin Khor, Executive Director of the South Centre

317. Ms. Heyzer remarked that the outcome of the deliberations would not only benefit the current session of the Commission but would also feed into a United Nations high-level conference in early June, as well as the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly later in the year. The Executive Secretary underlined the fact that the wide-ranging regulatory reforms that had been enacted since 1997 and conservative macroeconomic management had enhanced the region's resilience to the crisis and subsequently enabled its policymakers to implement aggressive expansionary fiscal and monetary policies. Consequently, the region's developing economies were projected to grow by 3 per cent in 2009. Despite that capacity to respond, exports had plummeted by figures in the double digits and as many as 23 million people—particularly young women employed in the export-oriented manufacturing sector—risked losing their jobs; millions more would experience rising income insecurity. There was a need to strengthen regional macroeconomic policy coordination and deepen economic integration to mitigate the impact of the economic crisis and reignite the engines of regional and global economic growth. Looking towards the future, the current crisis had provided the region with a window of opportunity for addressing longer-term issues, such as the energy crisis, food security and climate change, and had emphasized the need for laying the economic and social foundations for a more inclusive and sustainable development path.

318. H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-hoon shared the experiences of the Republic of Korea in dealing with the crisis, emphasizing its pre-emptive monetary and fiscal policies, including its Green New Deal project, while noting that views differed on whether the global recession was deepening or whether it had bottomed out. He also commented on the outcomes of the G-20 London Summit held at the beginning of April 2009,[33] noting in particular that agreement had been reached on stepping up financial regulatory systems, increasing financing support and establishing the Financial Stability Board by expanding the membership of the previous Financial Stability Forum. He further emphasized the need to avoid protectionist pressures in the implementation of fiscal stimulus packages and stressed that the conclusion of the WTO Doha Round was the best means of resisting protectionism. He noted the expanded role of the United Nations in establishing a monitoring mechanism to track and enhance the understanding of the impact of the economic crisis on the poor and vulnerable, and he was of the view that ESCAP could play an important role in that regard.

319. Mr. Abdoulie Janneh noted that, although Africa had a lower level of financial integration with the rest of the world than other regions, it was also severely affected by the global crisis. Africa had suffered from drastic drops in commodity prices and cuts in foreign direct investment and remittances, putting severe pressure on balances of payments and increasing the income and food insecurity of people, with potentially huge ramifications for social and political stability. In that context, he emphasized the urgent need for developed countries to keep their overseas development assistance commitments to Africa.

[33] See www.londonsummit.gov.uk.

320. Mr. Jan Kubis noted that the current crisis, the worst suffered by Europe since the Second World War, had had particularly severe effects on the region's emerging economies. He underlined the interdependencies among countries, be they developed or developing, while expressing concern that more decisive policy actions to restore the health of financial institutions in developed countries of the region had not yet materialized. He stressed that, without such actions, the prospects for the economic recovery of the whole region would be dim.

321. Mr. Chhibber noted that the decisions policymakers in the region took at the current juncture in time would have an important impact on prospects for the region's recovery from the crisis and the future of an Asia-Pacific century. He cautioned that important macroeconomic imbalances, which were at the root of the crisis, were not being addressed by stimulus packages thus far. In particular, he argued that the situation of over-consumption in the United States of America and Europe and over-saving in the Asia-Pacific region needed to be rebalanced by enhancing the coverage of social protection and improving the functioning of social safety nets in the region.

322. Mr. Khor discussed the role of finance and trade in the transmission of the crisis to the Asia-Pacific region and expressed concern about the current system's reliance on the United States dollar as a single reserve currency. In particular, he noted the need for the region to evolve a stronger position on a new international reserve system. He urged countries in the region to learn the necessary lessons from the current episode and to consider the need for enhanced regulation of capital flows into the region, for financial markets to foster financial stability and to avoid activities driven by speculation, and for the reform of the international financial architecture.

Sub-item (b)
Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region

323. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Progress and challenges in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific" (E/ESCAP/65/31).

324. Several delegations informed the Commission of the progress made in their respective countries towards the achievement of various Millennium Development Goals, focusing in particular on Goal 1, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, which was the most closely related to the theme topic for the Commission session.

325. Progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goal 1 continued to be mixed, with success in poverty reduction not always leading to a proportionate reduction of hunger. The Commission noted that the recent volatility in food and fuel prices had made the achievement of the Goals more difficult, especially in the least developed countries, and that national food security was a prerequisite for achieving Goal 1. One delegation suggested that regional policy on food security should be integrated into the regional platform for partnership on the Goals, with special attention being paid to the most vulnerable countries, such as the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

326. The Commission expressed concern that the current global financial and economic crises could have a significant impact on funding for the Millennium Development Goals and noted that efforts by all Governments and their development partners were needed to achieve the Goals by 2015. In that context, some delegations called for donor countries and agencies to maintain or increase official development assistance to fulfil their commitments.

327. The representative of Australia recalled her Government's announcement in 2008 of a four-year commitment of 200 million Australian dollars to fund selected United Nations partner agencies to assist developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The representative of China recalled his Government's announcement, at the high-level event on the Millennium Development Goals, held at United Nations Headquarters on 25 September 2008, of a series of assistance programmes in support of the Goals, including a $30 million trust fund for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, demonstration centres, technical expertise and educational opportunities aimed at improving agricultural productivity in developing countries.

328. The Commission was informed that the Regional Coordination Mechanism, chaired by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, played an important role in the regional partnership towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

329. Stating that evidence-based policies were indispensible to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, one delegation stressed the role of SIAP in helping member States to develop their statistical capacity and human resources. Noting the limited availability of data to measure the political, social, economic and gender impact of the global economic crisis, another delegation suggested that the United Nations regional commissions, including ESCAP, could play a constructive role in the global effort to establish a monitoring and alert mechanism, as suggested by the Secretary-General at the meeting of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination held in Paris on 4 and 5 April 2009.

330. One delegation requested that SIAP and ESCAP continue to play a lead role in assisting small statistical offices in building their statistical capacity, including in data processing and statistical analysis, and urged ESCAP to work closely with subregional institutions in the Pacific, through the ESCAP Pacific

Operations Centre, to improve the quality of official statistics in support of evidence-based policy- and decision-making.

Agenda item 10
Other matters

331. No other matter was discussed.

Agenda item 11
Adoption of the report of the Commission

332. At its fifth plenary meeting, on 29 April 2009, the Commission encouraged the secretariat to continue efforts to streamline and reform its servicing function.

333. The report of the Commission on its sixty-fifth session was adopted unanimously on 29 April 2009.

Chapter IV

RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS SIXTY-FIFTH SESSION

A. Resolutions

Resolution 65/1

Implementation of the Bali Outcome Document in addressing the food, fuel and financial crises[34]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[35] in which the Heads of State and Government strongly reiterated their determination to ensure the timely and full realization of all internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 63/239 of 24 December 2008 on the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus,

Recalling further its resolution 64/6 of 30 April 2008 on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region, in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Secretary to assist countries in the region in achieving the Goals, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries,

Expressing concern at the convergence of price volatility and the availability of food and fuel, the financial crisis, and climate change, which could threaten the economic and social well-being of the people of the region, as the increasing spillover effects of these crises have affected all countries in the region,

Also expressing concern about the financial crisis, which has become a global economic crisis and could complicate efforts to achieve energy and food security in the region and reduce vital investments in new and innovative technologies and infrastructure projects aimed at attaining food and energy security,

Emphasizing that, even in the circumstances of the financial crisis, countries should continue their efforts to combat climate change,

Noting with concern that the convergence of these interrelated crises could undermine the development gains of the region and negatively affect its future prospects, particularly with regard to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Executive Secretary in supporting the member States in dealing with these crises through in-depth analyses, policy dialogue, advocacy and increased capacity-building activities,

Noting the convening of the High-level Regional Policy Dialogue on "The food-fuel crisis and climate change: Reshaping the Development Agenda", organized jointly by the Government of Indonesia and the Commission and held in Bali, Indonesia, on 9 and 10 December 2008,

Taking note of the Bali Outcome Document,[36] which sets out several areas for regional cooperation,

1. *Invites* the countries of the region and international and regional organizations to urgently consider the implementation, as appropriate, of the recommendations contained in the Bali Outcome Document;[36]

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To continue to assist, in coordination with other international entities, taking into account their respective mandates, members and associate members, particularly the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in implementing the recommendations contained in the Bali Outcome Document[36] and in building their capacity to make appropriate policy responses that mitigate the impact of the economic crisis, restore growth and avoid future global shocks;

(b) To conduct analytical studies and share experiences on improving food and energy security, on responding to the financial crisis, and on sustainable agriculture, including its climate adaptation and mitigation potentials, particularly with regard to the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States;

(c) To convene, in coordination with international and regional organizations, including financial institutions concerned closely with the region, a regional dialogue with participation by government representatives and other experts, to discuss the progress so far achieved in the Asian and Pacific region in addressing the economic crisis and its impact on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and to report on the outcome for consideration by the Commission at its sixty-sixth session;

[34] See paras. 139 to 179 above.

[35] General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005.

[36] E/ESCAP/65/15/Add.1.

(d) To submit to the Commission at its sixty-sixth session a report on the progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

Fifth plenary meeting
29 April 2009

Resolution 65/2

Regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific[37]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 61/2 on the statute of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling also its resolution 62/10 on strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling further its resolution 64/1 on the restructuring of the conference structure of the Commission, by which it re-established the Committee on Statistics as the highest-level intergovernmental body concerned with statistics in Asia and the Pacific,

Recognizing that the Committee on Statistics, which brings together all the chief statisticians from the countries and areas in Asia and the Pacific, is the recognized and appropriate regional forum to discuss and coordinate all matters related to statistics development,

Welcoming the revitalization of the Committee on Statistics,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Committee on Statistics on its first session[38] and the report of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific;[39]

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to assist members and, as appropriate, associate members in strengthening their statistical capacity, in accordance with Commission resolution 62/10;

3. *Takes note* of the appreciation of members and associate members for technical cooperation and capacity-building activities in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific carried out by the secretariat and the training services delivered by the Statistics Division and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific in promoting national statistical capacity-building in the region;

4. *Expresses* appreciation to the members and associate members that have provided financial support to the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific;

5. *Encourages* members and associate members to implement paragraph 20 of the annex to Commission resolution 61/2 and, where appropriate, to increase financial support to the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific;

6. *Notes* that the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific will celebrate its fortieth anniversary in 2010 and encourages members and associate members to contribute to the preparations for this celebration;

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its sixty-seventh session.

Fifth plenary meeting
29 April 2009

Resolution 65/3

High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012[40]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 64/8 of 30 April 2008 on the regional implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action[41] and Biwako Plus Five towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific,[42] in which, inter alia, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to convene a high-level intergovernmental meeting to review the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five in 2012, the concluding year of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012,

Recalling also its resolution 59/3 of 4 September 2003 on regional implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific during the Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012,

Welcoming the adoption of Biwako Plus Five, which was aimed at enhancing the effective implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action over the remaining five years of the Decade,

Noting with satisfaction that, following ratification by the twentieth Government, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[43] entered into force on 3 May 2008, which is the most significant development achieved so far during the second Decade, 2003-2012, and that, as of 29 April 2009, many Governments that have ratified the Convention are from the Asia-Pacific region,

[37] See paras. 130 to 138 above.
[38] E/ESCAP/65/13.
[39] E/ESCAP/65/26.
[40] See paras. 115 to 129 above.
[41] E/ESCAP/APDDP/4/Rev.1.
[42] E/ESCAP/APDDP(2)/2.
[43] General Assembly resolution 61/106, annex I.

Recognizing that, at the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, held in Bangkok from 19 to 21 September 2007, the Government of the Republic of Korea expressed its willingness to host a meeting for the final review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons in 2012, in conjunction with the General Assembly of the Asia and Pacific Disability Forum and the World Congress of Rehabilitation International,

Welcoming the establishment of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in October 2008, to review the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Decides* that the venue of the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the final review of the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, should be decided by the Commission at its sixty-sixth session;

2. *Welcomes* the offer of the Republic of Korea to host the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the final review of the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, in conjunction with the General Assembly of the Asia and Pacific Disability Forum and the World Congress of Rehabilitation International;

3. *Calls* upon other members and associate members that may wish to host the high-level intergovernmental meeting to present their offers as soon as possible and no later than October 2009;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to examine all offers to host the high-level intergovernmental meeting on the final review of the implementation of the Second Decade, and to report the results of the examining process to the Commission at its sixty-sixth session.

Fifth plenary meeting
29 April 2009

Resolution 65/4

Strengthening of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific[44]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolutions 174 (XXXIII) of 29 April 1977 and 220 (XXXVIII) of 1 April 1982 on the Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling also its resolutions 60/5 of 28 April 2004 and 61/5 of 18 May 2005 on the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific,

Taking note of the Outcome Document[45] of the High-level Regional Policy Dialogue on "The food-fuel crisis and climate change: Reshaping the Development Agenda", organized by ESCAP and the Government of Indonesia and held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2008, which urged, inter alia, greater technical cooperation efforts to support capacity-building aimed at strengthening national food security programmes, research and development on sustainable agriculture, and regional cooperation in preventing and coping with food crises and ensuring that all people have access to food,

Noting with appreciation the significant financial resources that have been provided to the Centre, since its establishment, by member States,

Noting also with appreciation the allocation of a regular-budget P-5 post to the Centre for a senior economic affairs officer,

Taking note of the recommendations of the Governing Council at its fifth session, held in Bangkok on 4 March 2009, as contained in the report of the Centre,[46]

Welcoming the commitment of the Executive Secretary and the Governing Council to strengthen the Centre and increase its relevance for the countries in the region through a focus on policy and action research,

1. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Governing Council, within the existing statute[47] of the Centre, to turn the Centre into a coordinating research institute and a regional member-driven centre of excellence that focuses on poverty alleviation through secondary crops development with special attention to addressing food security, hunger and malnutrition;[48]

2. *Decides* that the new position and focus of the Centre should take into account the following aspects:

(a) The membership of the Technical Committee should include heads of national agricultural research centres of member countries;

(b) The research carried out by the Centre should be focused on sustainable secondary crop farming systems and agribusiness development in the context of inclusive agricultural and rural development for food security and poverty alleviation;

3. *Endorses* the conclusions of the Governing Council at its fifth session that the Centre's primary focus is on networking with national agricultural research centres in the region and beyond; promoting and coordinating research; highlighting and disseminating their research findings; and converting the results of primary research into relevant policy options for the region;[49]

[44] See paras. 39 to 48 above.

[45] E/ESCAP/65/15/Add.1.
[46] E/ESCAP/65/25.
[47] Commission resolution 60/5 of 28 April 2004, annex.
[48] See E/ESCAP/65/25, para. 1.
[49] Ibid., para. 3.

4. *Adopts* the recommendation of the Governing Council to allow for a larger Council than the current eight members plus the host country in order to enhance the sense of ownership of the Centre by the member States,[50] and decides, in this regard, to adopt the revised statute of the Centre, the text of which is annexed to the present resolution;

5. *Agrees*, in this regard, that all nine members submitting nominations for membership in the Governing Council of the Centre during the sixty-fifth session of the Commission, in addition to the host country, Indonesia, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, France, Iran (Islamic Republic of), India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and Thailand, should become members of the Council for the period 2009-2012;

6. *Urges* the members of the Commission to increase their regular voluntary contributions to the Centre, and to contribute professional staff working in the areas of poverty alleviation through secondary crops development to the Centre;

7. *Urges* the Executive Secretary to provide financial and human resources to the Centre, and to mobilize additional voluntary resources to enhance its capacity to fulfil its mandate;

8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its sixty-sixth session.

Fifth plenary meeting
29 April 2009

Annex

STATUTE OF THE CENTRE FOR ALLEVIATION OF POVERTY THROUGH SECONDARY CROPS DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Establishment

1. The Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as "CGPRT Centre"), established in April 1981 pursuant to Commission resolution 174 (XXXIII) of 29 April 1977 and its Statute adopted by Commission resolution 220 (XXXVIII) of 1 April 1982, shall continue in existence under the title Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as "CAPSA" or "the Centre") and under the terms of the present Statute.

2. The membership of CAPSA is identical to the membership of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as "ESCAP" or "the Commission").

3. The Centre has the status of a subsidiary body of ESCAP.

[50] Ibid., para. 2.

Objective

4. The objective of CAPSA is to promote a more supportive policy environment in member countries to enhance the living conditions of rural poor populations in disadvantaged areas, particularly those who rely on secondary crops agriculture for their livelihood, and to promote research and development related to agriculture to alleviate poverty in the Asian and Pacific region.

Functions

5. The Centre will achieve the above objective by undertaking such functions as:

- Coordination of socio-economic and policy research on secondary crops
- Networking and partnership with other international organizations and key stakeholders
- Research and analysis of trends and opportunities with regard to improving the economic status of rural populations
- Production, packaging and dissemination of information and successful practices on poverty reduction
- Dissemination of information and good practices on poverty reduction measures
- Training of national personnel, particularly national scientists and policy analysts
- Advisory services

Status and organization

6. CAPSA shall have a Governing Council (hereinafter referred to as "the Council"), a Director and staff, and a Technical Committee.

7. CAPSA is located in Bogor, Indonesia.

8. The activities of CAPSA shall be in line with relevant policy decisions adopted by the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission. CAPSA shall be subject to the Financial and Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the applicable administrative instructions.

Governing Council

9. The Centre shall have a Governing Council consisting of a representative nominated by the Government of Indonesia and no fewer than eight, but no more than fourteen representatives of members and associate members of the Commission elected by the Commission. The members and associate members elected by the Commission shall be elected for a period of three years but shall be eligible for re-election. The Executive Secretary or his/her representative shall attend meetings of the Council.

10. The Director of the Centre shall serve as Secretary of the Council.

11. Representatives of (a) States that are not members of the Council, (b) United Nations bodies and specialized and related agencies and (c) such other organizations as the Council may deem appropriate as well as experts in fields of interest to the Council may be invited by the Executive Secretary to attend meetings of the Council.

12. The Council shall meet at least once a year and may adopt its own rules of procedure. Sessions of the Council shall be convened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, who may propose special sessions of the Council at his/her own initiative and shall convene such special sessions at the request of a majority of Council members.

13. A quorum for meetings of the Council shall be a majority of its members.

14. Each member of the Council shall have one vote. Decisions and recommendations of the Council shall be made by consensus or, where this is not possible, by a majority of the members present and voting.

15. The Council shall, at each regular session, elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. They shall hold office until the next regular session of the Council. The Chairperson or, in his/her absence, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Council. If the Chairperson is unable to serve for the full term for which he/she has been elected, the Vice-Chairperson shall act as Chairperson for the remainder of that term.

16. The Council shall review the administration and financial status of CAPSA and the implementation of its programme of work. The Executive Secretary shall submit an annual report, as adopted by the Council, to the Commission at its annual sessions.

Director and staff

17. CAPSA shall have a Director and staff, who shall be ESCAP staff members appointed under the appropriate United Nations regulations, rules and administrative instructions. The Director shall be appointed in a manner consistent with United Nations regulations and rules. The Council will be invited to nominate candidates for the position of Director, once the vacancy is announced, and provide advice, as appropriate. Other members and associate members of the Commission may also submit nominations for the post.

18. The Director shall be responsible to the Executive Secretary of ESCAP for the administration of CAPSA and the implementation of its programme of work.

Technical Committee

19. CAPSA shall have a Technical Committee consisting of experts from members and associate members of ESCAP and from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Members of the Technical Committee shall be appointed by the Director in consultation with the Executive Secretary.

20. The Technical Committee shall be responsible for advising the Director on the formulation of the programme of work and on other technical matters concerning the operations of CAPSA.

21. Reports of meetings of the Technical Committee, and the Director's observations with respect thereto, shall be submitted to the Council at its next session.

22. The Chairman of the Technical Committee shall be elected by the Committee itself at each meeting.

Resources of the Centre

23. All members and associate members of ESCAP should be urged to make a regular annual contribution to the operations of the Centre. The United Nations shall administer a joint contribution trust fund in which these contributions shall be deposited.

24. The Centre will endeavour to mobilize sufficient resources to support its activities.

25. The United Nations shall maintain separate trust funds for voluntary contributions for technical cooperation projects or other extraordinary voluntary contributions for the activities of CAPSA.

26. The financial resources of CAPSA shall be administered in accordance with the United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules.

Amendments

27. Amendments to the present Statute shall be adopted by the Commission.

Matters not covered by this Statute

28. In the event of any procedural matter arising that is not covered by this Statute or rules of procedure adopted by the Governing Council under paragraph 12 of this Statute, the pertinent part of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific shall apply.

Entry into force

29. The present Statute shall enter into force on the date of its adoption by the Commission.

Resolution 65/5

Review of the operational details of the feasibility study for the establishment of an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communication and space technology-enabled disaster management in the Islamic Republic of Iran[51]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 64/10 of 30 April 2008, in which it invited the Islamic Republic of Iran to review the operational details of its proposal to

[51] See paras. 100 to 114 above.

establish an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communication and space technology-enabled disaster management, in order to clarify the implications, if any, of such changes on the scope, functions and value added products and services to be offered, along with timelines for scheduling the introduction of those activities, and to submit them to the Commission at its sixty-fifth session,

Noting with appreciation the generous offer of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the proposed centre, and welcoming the progress reported in conducting the review requested in paragraph 1 of resolution 64/10,

Noting also that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has requested additional time in order to provide the Commission with the supplementary information requested in paragraph 1 of resolution 64/10,

Invites the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to revise its draft resolution to take into account the outcome of the above-mentioned review and submit the revised version to the Commission for consideration at its sixty-sixth session.

Fifth plenary meeting
29 April 2009

Resolution 65/6

Support for the establishment of an international think tank of landlocked developing countries[52]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 58/201 of 23 December 2003, in which the Assembly endorsed the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,[53]

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 63/2 of 3 October 2008, in which the Assembly adopted the outcome document of the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action, paragraph 26 of which welcomed "the proposal to set up in Ulaanbaatar an international think tank to enhance the analytical capability of landlocked developing countries...", and urged "international organizations and donor countries to assist them in realizing this initiative",

Recalling further Commission resolution 63/5 of 23 May 2007 on the midterm review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, in which it requested the Executive Secretary, among other things, "to strengthen capacity-building activities for government agencies of landlocked and transit developing countries in the field of trade facilitation in order to establish a transparent, consistent and predictable environment for conducting international trade",

1. *Expresses its support for* the proposal by the Government of Mongolia to set up in Ulaanbaatar an international think tank to enhance the analytical capability of landlocked developing countries needed to maximize the efficiency of coordinated efforts for the effective implementation of the internationally agreed provisions, particularly the Almaty Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals;

2. *Invites* Governments, donor countries, relevant United Nations bodies, agencies, international and regional financial institutions and organizations, as well as the private sector and academic institutions, to support the landlocked developing countries in realizing the establishment of the proposed international think tank;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to provide the necessary advisory and technical support, in collaboration with regional and global stakeholders, with regard to preparations for the setting up of the proposed think tank;

4. *Calls upon* the Executive Secretary to designate the relevant unit of the secretariat as the Commission's focal point to assist in the coordination of regional efforts and the provision, upon request of governments, of advisory and technical services to help materialize the proposal.

Fifth plenary meeting
29 April 2009

B. Decisions

Decision 65/1

Dates, venue and theme topic for the sixty-sixth session of the Commission[54]

At its fifth plenary meeting, on 29 April 2009, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific decided that its sixty-sixth session would be held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in April or May 2010. The actual dates would be decided in consultation with the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission. The theme topic for the sixty-sixth session of the Commission shall be:

Addressing challenges in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals:

- Promoting a stable and supportive financial system;
- Green Growth or environmentally sustainable economic growth, including through technology and financing.

[52] See paras. 139 to 179 above.

[53] *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003* (A/CONF.202/3), annex I.

[54] See paras. 267 to 270 above.

Annex I

STATEMENT OF PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF ACTIONS AND PROPOSALS OF THE COMMISSION

1. The requests contained in the resolutions listed below will have no additional programme budget implications for the approved programme budget for 2008-2009[a] or the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011:[b]

(a) Resolution 65/1: Implementation of the Bali Outcome Document in addressing the food, fuel and financial crises;

(b) Resolution 65/2: Regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific;

(c) Resolution 65/3: High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012;

(d) Resolution 65/4: Strengthening of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific;

(e) Resolution 65/5: Review of the operational details of the feasibility study for the establishment of an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communication and space technology-enabled disaster management in the Islamic Republic of Iran;

(f) Resolution 65/6: Support for the establishment of an international think tank of landlocked developing countries.

2. Extrabudgetary resources, where appropriate, will be sought for the implementation of the activities required under the above-mentioned resolutions.

[a] See General Assembly resolution 62/237 of 22 December 2007.
[b] A/64/6 (Sect. 15).

Annex II

MEETINGS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES HELD SINCE THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

Subsidiary body and officers		*Session*	*Document symbol of report*
Committees			
I. Committee on Social Development		First session Bangkok 24 to 26 September 2008	E/ESCAP/65/11
Chairperson:	Ms. Alicia Bala (Philippines)		
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Muhammad Ali Shah (Pakistan)		
Rapporteur:	Ms. Oyu Vasha (Mongolia)		
II. Committee on Transport		First session Bangkok 29 to 31 October 2008	E/ESCAP/65/4
Chairperson:	Mr. Khandker Md. Iftekhar Haider (Bangladesh)		
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Erdem Direkler (Turkey)		
Rapporteur:	Mr. Nordin Abdul Rahman (Malaysia)		
III. Committee on Information and Communications Technology		First session Bangkok 19 to 21 November 2008	E/ESCAP/65/7
Chairperson:	Mr. Lalith Weeratunga (Sri Lanka)		
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Rufat Gulmammadov (Azerbaijan)		
Rapporteur:	Ms. Normala Sharom (Malaysia)		
IV. Committee on Statistics		First session Bangkok 4 to 6 February 2009	E/ESCAP/65/13
Chairperson:	Mr. Rusman Heriawan (Indonesia)		
Vice-Chairpersons:	Mr. Ma Jiantang (China) Mr. Birlik Mendybayev (Kazakhstan) Mr. Brian Pink (Australia)		
Rapporteur:	Mr. Pronab Sen (India)		
V. Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction		First session Bangkok 25 to 27 March 2009	E/ESCAP/65/9
Chairperson:	Mr. Muhammad Hatta Ab. Aziz (Malaysia)		
Vice-Chairpersons:	H.E. Mr. Luo Pingfei (China) H.E. Mr. Shahid Abdulla (Maldives) H.E. Mr. Dennis Momotaro (Marshall Islands) H.E. U Kyaw Thu (Myanmar) H.E. Mr. Altaf Muhammad Saleem (Pakistan) H.E. Mr. Ahn Sang-Soo (Republic of Korea)		
Rapporteur:	Mr. Purushottam Ghimire (Nepal)		

Subsidiary body and officers		*Session*	*Document symbol of report*
Governing Councils			
I. Governing Council of APCICT		Third session Ulaanbataar 9 December 2008	E/ESCAP/65/22
Chairperson:	Mr. Nyamkhuu Tsoodol (Mongolia)		
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Gadiraju Venkata Ramaraju (India)		
II. Governing Council of APCTT		Fourth session Bangkok 26 November 2008	E/ESCAP/65/23
Chairperson:	Mr. Weerapong Pairsuwan (Thailand)		
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Mahmoud Molanejad (Islamic Republic of Iran)		
III. Governing Council of UNAPCAEM		Fourth session Chiangrai, Thailand 12 and 13 February 2009	E/ESCAP/65/24
Chairperson:	Mr. Lakshman Mudaliar (Fiji)		
Rapporteur:	Dr. M.M. Pandey (India)		
IV. Governing Council of CAPSA		Fifth session Bangkok 4 March 2009	E/ESCAP/65/25
Chairperson:	Tengku Mohd Ariff Tengku Ahmad (Malaysia)		
Vice-Chairperson:	Mr. Sumardjo Gatot Irianto (Indonesia)		
Rapporteur:	Mr. Teodoro Solsoloy (Philippines)		
V. Governing Council of SIAP		Fourth session Chiba, Japan 11 and 12 November 2008	E/ESCAP/65/26
Chairperson:	Mr. Feng Nailin (China)		
Vice-Chairpersons:	Mr. Mutsumi Nakata (Japan) Mr. Akihiro Kimoto (Japan)		

Annex III

PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE COMMISSION

A. Publications issued since the sixty-fourth session*

Component: Executive direction and management

The Current Global Financial Turmoil & Asian Developing Countries, ESCAP Series on Inclusive and Sustainable Development: 2, 2008

Subprogramme 1. Poverty and development

Agricultural Trade Reform and Poverty in the Asia-Pacific: A Survey and Some New Results, ESCAP Working Paper Series (WP/08/01)

Asia-Pacific Development Journal,

Vol. 14, No. 2, December 2007 (ST/ESCAP/2496) (E.07.II.F.33)

Vol. 15, No. 1, June 2008 (ST/ESCAP/2520) (E.08.II.F.26)

Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2009: Addressing Triple Threats to Development (ST/ESCAP/2522) (E.09.II.F.11)

Filling Gaps in the Human Development Index: Findings from Asia and the Pacific, ESCAP Working Paper Series (WP/09/02)

Implementing the Monterrey Consensus in Asia and the Pacific (ST/ESCAP/2521) (E.08.II.F.25)

Macroeconomic Policy Brief,

Vol. 1, No. 1, December 2008

Vol. 1, No. 2, December 2008

Towards a New Model of PPPs: Can Public-private Partnerships Deliver Basic Services to the Poor? ESCAP Working Paper Series (WP/09/01)

Subprogramme 2. Statistics

Annual Core Indicators (online database, last updated 21 April 2009)

Short-term Indicators for Asia and the Pacific (online database, last updated 24 February 2009)

Statistical Newsletter (June, October and January 2008; March 2009)

Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2008 (ST/ESCAP/2531) (E.09.II.F.1)

Striving Together: ASEAN & The UN (ST/ESCAP/2524) (E.09.II.F.3)

Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in Asia and the Pacific (ST/ESCAP/2535) (E.09.II.F.12)

Subprogramme 4. Trade and investment

Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Review, vol. 4, 2008 (ST/ESCAP/2518) (E.09.II.F.7)

Directory of Trade- and Investment-related Organizations of Developing Countries and Areas in Asia and the Pacific (ST/ESCAP/2533) (available online only)

Emerging Trade Issues for Policymakers in Developing Countries in Asia and the Pacific, Studies in Trade and Investment No. 64 (ST/ESCAP/2526) (E.09.II.F.4)

Guidance for Subnational Innovation Systems and Technological Capacity-building Policies (ST/ESCAP/2507) (available online only)

Navigating Out of the Crisis: A Trade-led Recovery (ST/ESCAP/2538)

Traders' Manual for Least Developed Countries: Timor-Leste (ST/ESCAP/2493) (available online only)

Unveiling Protectionism: Regional Responses to Remaining Barriers in the Textiles and Clothing Trade (ST/ESCAP/2500) (E.08.II.F.17)

Subprogramme 5. Transport and tourism

Cultural Tourism Sites Management: A Training Manual for Trainers in the Greater Mekong Subregion (ST/ESCAP/2515)

Subprogramme 6. Environment and development

Building Community Resilience to Natural Disasters through Partnership: Sharing Experience and Expertise in the Region (ST/ESCAP/2508) (E.08.II.F.20)

Environment and Sustainable Development e-News,

Vol. 8, No. 2, June 2008

Vol. 8, No. 3, September 2008

Vol. 8, No. 4, December 2008

Greening Growth in Asia and the Pacific (ST/ESCAP/2510) (E.09.II.F.6)

Institutional Changes for Sanitation (ST/ESCAP/2534) (E.09.II.F.15)

* Where applicable, United Nations publication sales numbers, which start with the letter "E", are shown in parentheses.

Subprogramme 7. Information, communication and space technology

Asia Pacific Tech Monitor,

Vol. 25, No. 3, May-June 2008

Vol. 25, No. 4, July-August 2008

Vol. 25, No. 5, September-October 2008

Vol. 25, No. 6, November-December 2008

VATIS (Value Added Technology Information Service) Update: Biotechnology,

Vol. 1, No. 91, May-June 2008

Vol. 1, No. 92, July-August 2008

Vol. 1, No. 93, September-October 2008

Vol. 1, No. 94, November-December 2008

VATIS Update: Food Processing,

Vol. 3, No. 89, May-June 2008

Vol. 3, No. 90, July-August 2008

Vol. 3, No. 91, September-October 2008

Vol. 3, No. 92, November-December 2008

VATIS Update: Non-conventional Energy,

Vol. 2, No. 90, May-June 2008

Vol. 2, No. 91, July-August 2008

Vol. 2, No. 92, September-October 2008

Vol. 2, No. 93, November-December 2008

VATIS Update: Ozone Layer Protection,

Vol. 4, No. 88, May-June 2008

Vol. 4, No. 89, July-August 2008

Vol. 4, No. 90, September-October 2008

Vol. 4, No. 91, November-December 2008

VATIS Update: Waste Management,

Vol. 5, No. 86, May-June 2008

Vol. 5, No. 87, July-August 2008

Vol. 5, No. 88, September-October 2008

Vol. 5, No. 89, November-December 2008

Subprogramme 8. Social development

Asia-Pacific Population Journal

Vol. 23, No. 1, April 2008 (ST/ESCAP/2506) (E.08.II.F.99)

Vol. 23, No. 2, August 2008 (ST/ESCAP/2517) (E.08.II.F.98)

Vol. 23, No. 3, December 2008 (ST/ESCAP/2523) (E.08.II.F.97)

Building Capacity for Community-based Treatment and Continuing Care of Young Drug Users in the Greater Mekong Subregion (ST/ESCAP/2527) (E.09.II.F.9)

Enhancing Community Resilience to Natural Disasters: Lives of Children and Youth in Aceh (ST/ESCAP/2509)

Harmful Traditional Practices in Three Countries of South Asia: Culture, Human Rights and Violence against Women (ST/ESCAP/2530)

HIV and AIDS in Asia and the Pacific: A Review of Progress towards Universal Access (ST/ESCAP/2528) (E.09.II.F.8)

Looking into Pandora's Box: The Social Implications of International Migration in Asia, Asia-Pacific Population and Social Studies Series No. 164 (ST/ESCAP/2512)

Pacific Perspectives on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse of Children and Youth (ST/ESCAP/2519) (E.08.II.F.19)

Promoting Sustainable Strategies to Improve Access to Health Care in the Asian and Pacific Region (ST/ESCAP/2529) (E.09.II.F.2)

Regional Stakeholders' Consultation and Planning Workshop on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Child Sexual Abuse in the Pacific: A Pacific Regional Report (ST/ESCAP/2511) (E.08.II.F.18)

Report on the Regional Workshop on the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities and their Families in Asia and the Pacific, 11-13 October 2007, Shanghai, China (ST/ESCAP/2516)

Social Services Policies and Family Well-being in the Asian and Pacific Region, Asia-Pacific Population and Social Studies Series No. 165 (ST/ESCAP/2525) (E.09.II.F.5)

B. Documents submitted to the Commission at its sixty-fifth session

Document symbol	*Document title*	*Agenda item*
General series		
E/ESCAP/65/1	Recent macroeconomic developments and other issues to be raised at the first session of the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development	2(a)
E/ESCAP/65/2	Regional trade and investment: trends, issues and ESCAP responses	2(b)
E/ESCAP/65/3	End-of-decade report on the implementation of Commission resolution 56/1 on the Decade of Greater Mekong Subregion Development Cooperation, 2000-2009	2(b)
E/ESCAP/65/4	Report of the Committee on Transport on its first session	2(c)
E/ESCAP/65/5	Report on the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011)	2(c)
E/ESCAP/65/6	Turning crisis into opportunity: greening economic recovery strategies	2(d)
E/ESCAP/65/7	Report of the Committee on Information and Communications Technology on its first session	2(e)
E/ESCAP/65/8	Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions relating to information and communications technology	2(e)
E/ESCAP/65/9	Report of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction on its first session	2(f)
E/ESCAP/65/10	Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolution 64/2 on regional cooperation in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters in Asia and the Pacific	2(f)
E/ESCAP/65/11	Report of the Committee on Social Development on its first session	2(g)
E/ESCAP/65/12	Summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to social development issues	2(g)
E/ESCAP/65/13	Report of the Committee on Statistics on its first session	2(h)
E/ESCAP/65/15	The food-fuel-financial crisis and climate change: addressing threats to development	3(a)
E/ESCAP/65/15/Add.1	Bali Outcome Document	3(a)
E/ESCAP/65/16	Regional cooperation for shared prosperity and social progress	3(b)
E/ESCAP/65/17	Summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to countries with special needs	3(c)
E/ESCAP/65/18 and Add.1	Draft programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011	4(a)
E/ESCAP/65/19 and Add.1	Proposed programme changes for 2008-2009	4(b)
E/ESCAP/65/20	Proposed road map for the establishment of new subregional offices in East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia	4(c)
E/ESCAP/65/20/Add.1 and Corr.1	Initial report on the most feasible and strategic locations for the new ESCAP subregional offices for East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia	4(c)

Document symbol	*Document title*	*Agenda item*
E/ESCAP/65/21	Overview of technical cooperation activities and extrabudgetary contributions	4(d)
E/ESCAP/65/22	Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development	5
E/ESCAP/65/23	Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology	5
E/ESCAP/65/24	United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery	5
E/ESCAP/65/25	Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific	5
E/ESCAP/65/26	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific	5
E/ESCAP/65/27	Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission	6
E/ESCAP/65/28	Dates, venue and theme topic for the sixty-sixth session of the Commission	7
E/ESCAP/65/29	Towards sustainable agriculture and food security in Asia and the Pacific	8
E/ESCAP/65/30	Addressing the financial crisis and its convergence with other threats to development: towards a stable and supportive financial system for development	9(a)
E/ESCAP/65/30/Add.1	Analysis of regional impact and policy responses to the crisis: update	9(a)
E/ESCAP/65/31	Progress and challenges in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific	9(b)
Limited series		
E/ESCAP/65/L.1	Provisional agenda	1(c)
E/ESCAP/65/L.2/Rev.1	Annotated provisional agenda	1(c)
E/ESCAP/65/L.3 and addenda and Corr.1	Draft report	11
E/ESCAP/65/L.4	Draft resolution: High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012	2(g)
E/ESCAP/65/L.5	Draft resolution: Regional technical cooperation and capacity-building in statistics development in Asia and the Pacific	2(h)
E/ESCAP/65/L.6	Draft resolution: Support for the establishment of an international think tank of landlocked developing countries	3(c)
E/ESCAP/65/L.7	Draft resolution: Implementation of the Bali Outcome Document in addressing the food, fuel and financial crises	3(a)
E/ESCAP/65/L.8	Draft resolution: Strengthening of the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific	2(a)
E/ESCAP/65/L.9	Draft resolution: Review of the operational details of the feasibility study for the establishment of an Asian and Pacific centre for information, communication and space technology-enabled disaster management in the Islamic Republic of Iran	2(f)
E/ESCAP/65/L.10	Draft decision: Dates, venue and theme topic for the sixty-sixth session of the Commission	7

Document symbol	*Document title*	*Agenda item*
Information series		
E/ESCAP/65/INF/1	Information note for participants	
E/ESCAP/65/INF/2	Report of the Typhoon Committee	2(f)
E/ESCAP/65/INF/3	Report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones	2(f)
E/ESCAP/65/INF/4	Report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia	2(d)
E/ESCAP/65/INF/5	Report of the Mekong River Commission	2(d)
E/ESCAP/65/INF/6	ESCAP activities for the benefit of countries with special needs in 2008-2009	3(c)
E/ESCAP/65/INF/8/Rev.2	List of participants	

Annex IV

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

As adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its fourth session, amended by the Council at subsequent sessions, and revised in consequence of various General Assembly resolutions

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered General Assembly resolution 46(I) of 11 December 1946, in which the General Assembly "recommends that, in order to give effective aid to the countries devastated by war, the Economic and Social Council, at its next session, give prompt and favourable consideration to the establishment of ... an Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East",

Having noted the report of the Working Group for Asia and the Far East of the Temporary Sub-Commission on Economic Reconstruction of Devastated Areas,

Establishes an Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific with terms of reference as follows:

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the Council, shall, provided that the Commission takes no action in respect of any country without the agreement of the Government of that country:

(a) Initiate and participate in measures for facilitating concerted action for the economic reconstruction and development of Asia and the Pacific, for raising the level of economic activity in Asia and the Pacific and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of these areas both among themselves and with other countries of the world;

(b) Make or sponsor such investigations and studies of economic and technological problems and developments within territories of Asia and the Pacific as the Commission deems appropriate;

(c) Undertake or sponsor the collection, evaluation and dissemination of such economic, technological and statistical information as the Commission deems appropriate;

(d) Perform such advisory services, within the available resources of its secretariat, as the countries of the region may desire, provided that such services do not overlap with those rendered by the specialized agencies or the relevant United Nations bodies;

(e) Assist the Economic and Social Council, at its request, in discharging its functions within the region in connection with any economic problems, including problems in the field of technical assistance;

(f) In carrying out the above functions, deal, as appropriate, with the social aspects of economic development and the interrelationship of the economic and social factors.

2. The territories of Asia and the Pacific referred to in paragraph 1 shall include Afghanistan; American Samoa; Armenia; Australia; Azerbaijan; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; China; Cook Islands; Fiji; French Polynesia; Georgia; Guam; Hong Kong, China; India; Indonesia; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Japan; Kazakhstan; Kiribati; Korea; Kyrgyzstan; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Macao, China; Malaysia; Maldives; Marshall Islands; Micronesia (Federated States of); Mongolia; Myanmar; Nauru; Nepal; New Caledonia; New Zealand; Niue; Northern Mariana Islands; Pakistan; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Russian Federation; Samoa; Singapore; Solomon Islands; Sri Lanka; Tajikistan; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Tonga; Turkey; Turkmenistan; Tuvalu; Uzbekistan; Vanuatu; and Viet Nam.

3. The members of the Commission shall consist of Afghanistan, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, France, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Myanmar, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Pakistan, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Viet Nam, provided that any State in the area which may hereafter become a Member of the United Nations shall be thereupon admitted as a member of the Commission.

4. The associate members shall include American Samoa; Cook Islands; French Polynesia; Guam; Hong Kong, China; Macao, China; New Caledonia; Niue; and Northern Mariana Islands.

5. Any territory, part or group of territories within the geographical scope of the Commission as defined in paragraph 2 may, on presentation of its application to the Commission by the member responsible for the international relations of such territory, part or group of territories, be admitted by the Commission as an associate member of the Commission. If it has become responsible for its own international relations, such territory, part or group of territories may be admitted as an associate member of the Commission on itself presenting its application to the Commission.

6. Representatives of associate members shall be entitled to participate without vote in all meetings of the Commission, whether sitting as Commission or as Committee of the Whole.

7. Representatives of associate members shall be eligible to be appointed as members of any committee, or other subordinate body, which may be set up by the Commission and shall be eligible to vote and hold office in such body.

8. The Commission is empowered to make recommendations on any matters within its competence directly to the Governments of members or associate members concerned, Governments admitted in consultative capacity, and the specialized agencies concerned. The Commission shall submit for the Council's prior consideration any of its proposals of activities that would have important effects on the economy of the world as a whole.

9. The Commission shall invite any Member of the United Nations not a member of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in its consideration of any matter of particular concern to that non-member.

10. The Commission shall invite representatives of specialized agencies and may invite representatives of any intergovernmental organization to participate in a consultative capacity in its consideration of any matter of particular concern to that agency or organization, following the practice of the Economic and Social Council.

11. The Commission shall make arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which have been granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with the principles approved by the Council for this purpose and contained in Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

12. The Commission shall take measures to ensure that the necessary liaison is maintained with other organs of the United Nations and with the specialized agencies. The Commission shall establish appropriate liaison and cooperation with other regional commissions in accordance with the resolutions and directives of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

13. The Commission may, after discussion with any specialized agency functioning in the same general field, and with the approval of the Council, establish such subsidiary bodies as it deems appropriate, for facilitating the carrying out of its responsibilities.

14. The Commission shall adopt its own rules of procedure, including the method of selecting its Chairperson.

15. The Commission shall submit to the Council a full report on its activities and plans, including those of any subsidiary bodies, once a year.

16. The administrative budget of the Commission shall be financed from the funds of the United Nations.

17. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall appoint the staff of the Commission, which shall form part of the Secretariat of the United Nations.

18. The headquarters of the Commission shall be located at Bangkok, Thailand.

19. The Council shall, from time to time, make special reviews of the work of the Commission.

Annex V

RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

As drawn up at the first session, confirmed and adopted at the second session, and amended at subsequent sessions of the Commission.

Chapter I

SESSIONS

Rule 1

The following principles shall apply as regards date and place for the sessions of the Commission:

(a) The Commission shall at each session recommend the date and place for its next session, subject to the approval of the Council and in consultation with the Secretary-General. Sessions of the Commission shall also be held within forty-five days of the communication to the Executive Secretary of a request to that effect by the Economic and Social Council, and, in that case, the Secretary-General shall establish the place of such sessions in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission;

(b) In special cases the date and place of the session may be altered by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission and the Council's Interim Committee on Programme of Conferences. At the request of the majority of the members of the Commission, the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Chairman of the Commission and the Council's Interim Committee on Programme of Conferences, may also alter the date and place of the session;

(c) Sessions shall ordinarily be held at the office of the United Nations in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission may recommend holding a particular session elsewhere.

Rule 2

The Executive Secretary shall, at least forty-two days before the commencement of a session, distribute a notice of the opening date of the session, together with three copies of the provisional agenda and of the basic documents relating to each item appearing on the provisional agenda. Distribution shall be similar to that under rule 49.

Rule 3

The Commission shall invite any Member of the United Nations not a member of the Commission to participate in a consultative capacity in its consideration of any matter of particular concern to that Member.

Chapter II

AGENDA

Rule 4

The provisional agenda for each session shall be drawn up by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the Chairman.

Rule 5

The provisional agenda for any session shall include:

(a) Items arising from previous sessions of the Commission;

(b) Items proposed by the Economic and Social Council;

(c) Items proposed by any member or associate member of the Commission;

(d) Items proposed by a specialized agency in accordance with the agreements of relationship concluded between the United Nations and such agencies;

(e) Items proposed by non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, subject to the provisions of rule 6;

(f) Any other items which the Chairman or the Executive Secretary sees fit to include.

Rule 6

Non-governmental organizations in general consultative status may propose items on matters within their competence for the provisional agenda of the Commission, subject to the following conditions:

(a) An organization which intends to propose such an item shall inform the Executive Secretary at least sixty-three days before the commencement of the session, and before formally proposing an item shall give due consideration to any comments he may make;

(b) The proposal shall be formally submitted with the relevant basic documentation not less than forty-nine days before the commencement of the session. The item shall be included in the agenda of the Commission if it is adopted by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

Rule 7

The first item upon the provisional agenda for each session shall be the adoption of the agenda.

Rule 8

The Commission may amend the agenda at any time.

Chapter III

REPRESENTATION AND CREDENTIALS

Rule 9

Each member shall be represented on the Commission by an accredited representative.

Rule 10

A representative may be accompanied to the sessions of the Commission by alternate representatives and advisers and, when absent, he may be replaced by an alternate representative.

Rule 11

The credentials of each representative appointed to the Commission, together with a designation of alternate representatives, shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary without delay.

Rule 12

The Chairman and the two Vice-Chairmen shall examine the credentials and report upon them to the Commission.

Chapter IV

OFFICERS

Rule 13

The Commission shall, at its first meeting of each year, elect from among its representatives a Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen, designated as First and Second Vice-Chairmen, who shall hold office until their successors are elected. They shall be eligible for re-election.

Rule 14

If the Chairman is absent from a meeting, or any part thereof, the Vice-Chairman designated by the Chairman shall preside.

Rule 15

If the Chairman ceases to represent a member of the Commission, or is so incapacitated that he can no longer hold office, the First Vice-Chairman shall become Chairman for the unexpired portion of the term. If the First Vice-Chairman also ceases to represent a member of the Commission, or is so incapacitated that he can no longer hold office, the Second Vice-Chairman shall become Chairman for the unexpired portion of the term.

Rule 16

The Vice-Chairman acting as Chairman shall have the same powers and duties as the Chairman.

Rule 17

The Chairman, or the Vice-Chairman acting as Chairman, shall participate in the meetings of the Commission as such, and not as the representative of the member by whom he was accredited. The Commission shall admit an alternate representative to represent that member in the meetings of the Commission and to exercise its right to vote.

Chapter V

SECRETARIAT

Rule 18

The Executive Secretary shall act in that capacity at all meetings of the Commission and of its subcommissions, other subsidiary bodies and committees. He may appoint another member of the staff to take his place at any meeting.

Rule 19

The Executive Secretary or his representative may at any meeting make either oral or written statements concerning any question under consideration.

Rule 20

The Executive Secretary shall direct the staff provided by the Secretary-General and required by the Commission, its subcommissions, and any other subsidiary bodies and committees.

Rule 21

The Executive Secretary shall be responsible for the necessary arrangements being made for meetings.

Rule 22

The Executive Secretary in carrying out his functions shall act on behalf of the Secretary-General.

Rule 23

Before new proposals which involve expenditure from United Nations funds are approved by the

Commission, the Executive Secretary shall prepare and circulate to members an estimate of that part of the cost involved in the proposals which could not be met out of the resources available to the secretariat. It shall be the duty of the Chairman to draw the attention of members to this estimate, and invite discussion on it before the proposals are approved.

Chapter VI

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 24

A majority of the members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum.

Rule 25

In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him elsewhere by these rules, the Chairman shall declare the opening and closing of each meeting of the Commission, shall direct the discussion, ensure the observance of these rules, and shall accord the right to speak, put questions to the vote, and announce decisions. The Chairman may also call a speaker to order if his remarks are not relevant to the subject under discussion.

Rule 26

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may raise a point of order. In this case, the Chairman shall immediately state his ruling. If it is challenged, the Chairman shall forthwith submit his ruling to the Commission for decision, and it shall stand unless overruled.

Rule 27

During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the adjournment of the debate. Any such motion shall have priority. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one representative shall be allowed to speak in favour of, and one representative against, the motion.

Rule 28

A representative may at any time move the closure of the debate whether or not any other representative has signified his wish to speak. Not more than two representatives may be granted permission to speak against the closure.

Rule 29

The Chairman shall take the sense of the Commission on a motion for closure. If the Commission is in favour of the closure, the Chairman shall declare the debate closed.

Rule 30

The Commission may limit the time allowed to each speaker.

Rule 31

Draft resolutions, and substantial amendments or motions, shall be introduced in writing and handed to the Executive Secretary, who shall circulate copies to the representatives at least twenty-four hours before they are discussed and voted upon, unless the Commission decides otherwise.

Rule 32

Upon the request of any member, any motion and amendment thereto made by any speaker shall be given to the Chairman in writing and shall be read by him before any further speaker is called upon and also immediately before a vote is taken on such motion or amendment. The Chairman may direct that any motion or amendment be circulated to the members present before a vote is taken.

This rule shall not apply to formal motions such as one for closure or adjournment.

Rule 33

Principal motions and resolutions shall be put to the vote in the order of their submission unless the Commission decides otherwise.

Rule 34

When an amendment revises, adds to or deletes from a proposal, the amendment shall be put to the vote first, and, if it is adopted, the amended proposal shall then be put to the vote.

Rule 35

If two or more amendments are moved to a proposal, the Commission shall vote first on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal; then, if necessary, on the amendment next furthest removed; and so on, until all the amendments have been put to the vote.

Rule 36

The Commission may, at the request of a representative, decide to put a motion or resolution to the vote in parts. If this is done, the text resulting from the series of votes shall be put to the vote as a whole.

Chapter VII

VOTING

Rule 37

Each member of the Commission shall have one vote.

Rule 38

Except for the provision of rule 6*(b)*, decisions of the Commission shall be made by a majority of the members present and voting.

Rule 39

The Commission shall take no action in respect of any country without the agreement of the Government of that country.

Rule 40

The Commission shall normally vote by a show of hands. If any representative requests a roll-call, a roll-call shall be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the members.

Rule 41

All elections shall be decided by secret ballot.

Rule 42

If a vote is equally divided upon matters other than elections, a second vote shall be taken at the next meeting. If this vote also results in equality, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.

Rule 43

After the voting has commenced, no representative shall interrupt voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. Brief statements by members consisting solely of explanations of their votes may be permitted by the Chairman, if he deems it necessary, before the voting has commenced or after the voting has been completed.

Chapter VIII

LANGUAGES

Rule 44

Chinese, English, French and Russian shall be the working languages of the Commission.

Rule 45

Speeches made in one of the working languages shall be interpreted into the other working languages.

Chapter IX

RECORDS

Rule 46

Summary records of the meetings of the Commission shall be kept by the secretariat. They shall be sent as soon as possible to the representatives of members and to the representatives of any other government agency or organization which participated in the meeting concerned. Such representatives shall inform the secretariat, not later than seventy-two hours after the circulation of any summary record, of any changes they wish to have made. Any disagreement concerning such changes shall be referred to the Chairman, whose decision shall be final.

Rule 47

The corrected version of the summary records of public meetings shall be distributed as soon as possible in accordance with the usual practice of the United Nations. This shall include distribution to non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status and those on the Roster, and on appropriate occasions to consultative members.

Rule 48

The corrected version of the summary records of private meetings shall be distributed as soon as possible to the members of the Commission, to any consultative member participating in the meeting concerned, and to the specialized agencies. They shall be distributed to all the Members of the United Nations if and when the Commission so decides.

Rule 49

As soon as possible, the text of all reports, resolutions, recommendations and other formal decisions made by the Commission, its subcommissions or other subsidiary bodies and its committees shall be communicated to the members of the Commission, to the consultative members concerned, to all other Members of the United Nations, to the specialized agencies, and to the non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status and those on the Roster.

Chapter X

PUBLICITY OF MEETINGS

Rule 50

The meetings of the Commission shall ordinarily be held in public. The Commission may decide that a particular meeting or meetings shall be held in private.

Chapter XI

CONSULTATIONS WITH SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Rule 51

1. Where an item proposed for the provisional agenda for a session contains a proposal for new activities to be undertaken by the United Nations relating to matters which are of direct concern to one or more specialized

agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Executive Secretary shall enter into consultation with the agency or agencies concerned and report to the Commission on the means of achieving coordinated use of the resources of the respective agencies.

2. Where a proposal put forward in the course of a meeting for new activities to be undertaken by the United Nations relates to matters which are of direct concern to one or more specialized agencies or the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Executive Secretary shall, after such consultation as may be possible with the representatives at the meeting of the other agency or agencies concerned, draw the attention of the meeting to these implications of the proposal.

3. Before deciding on proposals referred to above, the Commission shall satisfy itself that adequate consultations have taken place with the agencies concerned.

Chapter XII

RELATIONS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Rule 52

Non-governmental organizations in general and special consultative status may designate authorized representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Commission. Organizations on the Roster may have representatives present at such meetings which are concerned with matters within their field of competence.

Rule 53

Written statements relevant to the work of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies may be submitted by organizations in general and special consultative status on subjects for which these organizations have a special competence. Such statements shall be circulated by the Executive Secretary to the members and associate members of the Commission except those statements which have become obsolete - e.g. those dealing with matters already disposed of, and those which have already been circulated in some other form to members and associate members of the Commission or its subsidiary bodies.

Rule 54

The following conditions shall be observed regarding the submission and circulation of such written statements:

(a) The written statement shall be submitted in one of the official languages;

(b) It shall be submitted in sufficient time for appropriate consultation to take place between the Executive Secretary and the organization before circulation;

(c) The organization shall give due consideration to any comments which the Executive Secretary may make in the course of such consultation before transmitting the statement in final form;

(d) A written statement submitted by an organization in general consultative status will be circulated in full if it does not exceed 2,000 words. Where a statement is in excess of 2,000 words, the organization shall submit a summary, which will be circulated, or shall supply sufficient copies of the full text in the working languages for distribution. A statement will also be circulated in full, however, upon the specific request of the Commission or of one of its subsidiary bodies;

(e) A written statement submitted by an organization in special consultative status will be circulated in full if it does not exceed 1,500 words. Where a statement is in excess of 1,500 words, the organization shall submit a summary, which will be circulated, or shall supply sufficient copies of the full text in the working languages for distribution. A statement will also be circulated in full, however, upon the specific request of the Commission or other subsidiary bodies;

(f) The Executive Secretary in consultation with the Chairman or the Commission itself may invite organizations on the Roster to submit written statements. The provisions of paragraphs *(a)*, *(b)*, *(c)* and *(e)* above shall apply to such statements;

(g) A written statement or summary, as the case may be, will be circulated by the Executive Secretary in the working languages and, upon the request of a member or associate member of the Commission, in any of the official languages.

Rule 55

(a) The Commission and its subsidiary bodies may consult with organizations in general or special consultative status either directly or through a committee or committees established for the purpose. In all cases, such consultations may be arranged on the request of the organization;

(b) On the recommendation of the Executive Secretary and at the request of the Commission or one of its subsidiary bodies, organizations on the Roster may also be heard by the Commission or its subsidiary bodies.

Rule 56

Subject to rule 23 the Commission may recommend that a non-governmental organization which has special competence in a particular field should undertake specific studies or investigations or prepare specific papers for the Commission. The limitations of rule 54*(d)* and *(e)* shall not apply in this case.

Chapter XIII

SUBCOMMISSIONS, OTHER SUBSIDIARY BODIES AND COMMITTEES

Rule 57

After discussion with any specialized agency functioning in the same field, and with the approval of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission may establish such continually acting subcommissions or other subsidiary bodies as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions and shall define the powers and composition of each of them. Such autonomy as may be necessary for the effective discharge of the technical responsibilities laid upon them may be delegated to them.

Rule 58

The Commission may establish such committees and subcommittees as it deems necessary to assist it in carrying out its tasks.

Rule 59

Subcommissions or other subsidiary bodies and committees, subcommittees and working parties shall adopt their own rules of procedure unless otherwise decided by the Commission.

Chapter XIV

REPORTS

Rule 60

The Commission shall, once a year, submit to the Economic and Social Council a full report on its activities and plans, including those of any subsidiary bodies.

Chapter XV

AMENDMENTS AND SUSPENSIONS

Rule 61

Any of these rules of procedure may be amended or suspended by the Commission, provided that the proposed amendments or suspensions do not attempt to set aside the terms of reference laid down by the Economic and Social Council.

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